CONTRACT BRIDGE COMPLETE

ELY CULBERTSON

THE GOLD BOOK OF BIDDING AND PLAY

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by

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TO JO
TO JOYCE
TO BRUCE
MY FUTURE CHAMPION
TEAM OF FOUR

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

In presenting the English Edition of *The Gold Book of Bidding and Play*, to the British Bridge lovers, I have decided to omit or add nothing to the original American Edition. My main reason for writing this preface to the English Edition is to express my deep gratitude to the British players for their wonderful support accorded to the Approach-Forcing (Culbertson) System and the highly sportsmanlike treatment of my American team-mates and myself during our numerous matches in England. I'm particularly sensitive to the friendship shown to me by so many British players as it comes from the country which, next to mine, I love and admire the most. I'm also mindful of the fact that Contract Bridge would not have been possible without the basic contributions of the English genius starting with Whist, Bridge, and culminating through Auction in Contract Bridge. However much we Americans have done in developing the modern forms of Contract Bridge, this wonderful intellectual game is essentially English. I'm also mindful of the fact that the *Gold Book* owes a great many of its pages to the efforts and intelligence of British players and writers who, in many cases, have enabled me to codify what they have originated.

authors who have published and are publishing booklets and pamphlets dealing with the Culbertson System, and by the millions of advanced players and students all over the world. The Gold Book fills, I hope, the need.

The Gold Book consists of three books in one.

Book I covers the entire field of bidding technique and methods, from the angle of the most up-to-date expert bidding. While a number of simple rules are offered as aids to beginners and average players, the standpoint is always that of the best bid against the best defence.

The improvements are too numerous to be listed in detail, but they follow two main directions: simplification, and better methods for treating swing hands.

In recent years Contract Bridge has become somewhat dinosaurish and top-heavy under the accumulation of innumerable small improvements, variations and exceptions. To overcome this defect, the New Culbertson System has standardized the requirements for opening bids, practically eliminating the considerations of vulnerability and position; has lowered and simplified the minimum requirements for biddable suits; has brought the various *forcing*, '*almost*'-*forcing* and '*inferentially*'-*forcing* bids under a simple formula; and, while not affecting the basic principles of Approach and Force, has developed a beautiful and strikingly effective series of opening no-trump bids, changing it from the vaguest to the most precise bid of all.

The principal tendency of the New Culbertson System has been to develop more effective methods of treating swing hands—that is, hands on which heavy penalties, slam premiums, and big differences in gain or loss are scored. Few realize that the swing hands, though relatively rare (occurring in less than ten per cent of all deals) control seventy per cent of a player's net profit or loss. It is my sad observation that most experts have not learned to handle swing hands, and that as for the average player, it is the rule rather than the exception that he will find himself on the wrong side of a swing.

In order better to control swing hands, new methods of penalty doubles are introduced; the field of shut-out bids has been greatly enlarged and is enriched by the addition of

an opening three-bid which shows in one bid a ready-made suit—information of vital importance on many hands; the precision of game and part-score bidding has been greatly increased; a great deal of study has gone into the subtle and difficult art of passing (for many may know how to bid, but few have learned how to pass); slam bidding has been improved and simplified.

Book II deals with the structure, distribution and philosophy of cards. The treatment of Safety in bidding will lay the foundation of unbeatable Bridge. The Law of Symmetry will show how a player can further protect himself by expecting the unexpected in his journey through the treacherous land of freaks. The chapter on Plastic Valuation discusses the expert's way of valuing his hands. The remaining part of Book II deals with other aspects of psychology, strategy, and philosophy of cards.

In *Book III*, I have attempted to cover the entire field of declarer's and defenders' play as simply and as completely as possible. It goes without saying that the limitation of space prevents my presenting a number of valuable situations in plays and leads. The *Red Book on Play*, containing as many pages on leads and play alone as this book has on bidding and play, remains my principal work on the play of the cards and the most complete presentation of plays, leads and signals ever published.

The Gold Book represents my endeavour to provide a reasoned and fully illustrated exposition of modern Contract Bridge. For those who wish the basic facts for quick reference, there is a *New Summary* based on the Gold Book, a new and improved edition that has proved to be the most popular Bridge book ever written. There is also a *New Self-Teacher* for those who wish to learn the game by simple steps. The Gold Book and its companions will explain much and teach much. But there is also the ever-present need for personal experience. A book is the experience of the *other* fellow. In order to get the indispensable personal experience and to have it properly interpreted for you, look for a teacher in the flesh and blood—a relative or friend, if he *really knows*, or a professionally trained, certified Bridge teacher, who has already proved to be the best Bridge friend to millions, as she is to me.

I wish to express my gratitude for the assistance I have received in the preparation of this book from the authors, master players and teachers of the world, and especially from the millions of average players, whose practical testing of my methods has always been of such great value to me, and whose loyal support has spurred me on in my task.

My wife, Josephine Culbertson, has not only edited this book but has been, in effect, a collaborator in it. In all the world of great men and women players she has no peer as a player or as an analyst, and without her constant advice and assistance the New Culbertson System, and the Gold Book which explains it, could never have been completed.

I am also greatly indebted for untiring co-operation and advice to Albert Morehead, who has also been an editor of this book; to Richard L. Frey, Alfred P. Sheinwold and Alphonse Moyse, Jun., who are not only among the world's greatest players but who have proved themselves, in their assistance to me on the Gold Book, to be truly great Bridge analysts; to Samuel Fry, Jun., Theodore A. Lightner, Sydney Rusinow, and A. Mitchell Barnes, champion players who responded so willingly in testing the new methods; and to other great players everywhere, but particularly in the experts' games at the Crockford's Clubs of New York and Chicago, the world's leading Bridge clubs, who put all the latest bidding and playing methods into immediate execution and thus furnished invaluable testing for them. I am grateful to the entire staff of the *Bridge World Magazine* for loyal co-operation and effort in preparing the manuscript, and especially to Doris Mandell and Virginia Charsha, who often typed for sixteen hours at a stretch.

Finally, I acknowledge my debt for the work that the millions of players not only have done but *will do* in testing and improving my own ideas.

ELY CULBERTSON

DEFINITIONS

The reader should consult the following list to know the meaning of technical Bridge terms used in this book.

Other terms are defined on page 529, in the Laws of Contract Bridge.

Approach Bid: Any bid, usually in a suit, when made at an economically low level of bidding.

Asking Bid: An artificial bid requesting specific information in the asked suit.

Blank Hand: A hand devoid of honour strength. If it contains no card higher than the nine it is a 'bust' or Yarborough.

Block: To prevent the running of a suit by retaining the master card.

Cash: To lead one or more winning cards.

Contract: (1) The game of Contract Bridge; (2) the final legal bid made during the auction, whether undoubled, doubled or redoubled.

Convention: A call or a play having a definitely understood meaning usually based on the logic of the bidding or playing situation.

Coup: Any master stroke or brilliant play.

Cover: To play a higher card than one previously played in the same trick.

Deal: (1) A complete deck of fifty-two cards divided into four hands of thirteen cards each; (2) the period of time during which a deal is in play; (3) the distribution of the cards in rotation to the players.

Declarer: The player who for his side plays both his own and the dummy hand.

Defender: In play, an opponent of declarer; in bidding, a member of the side which does *not* make the first bid.

Discard: To play a card of a suit other than the suit led.

Distribution: (1) The manner in which the thirteen cards of a suit are divided among the four players; (2) the hand-pattern or the manner in which the four suits are divided in

a single player's hand; (3) the four hand-patterns of any particular deal or the manner in which the fifty-two cards are divided among four players.

Doubleton: An original holding of two cards in a suit.

Dummy: (1) The hand of declarer's partner after the opening lead; (2) declarer's partner.

False Card: A card played with the intention of deceiving adversaries as to the true holding in the suit.

Follow Suit: To play a card of the suit led.

Force: (1) A call which has the effect of obliging partner to keep the bidding open; (2) to lead a card which declarer must ruff to avoid losing the trick.

Game: A trick score of 100 points or more.

Guard: A card of a suit in which a player holds one or more higher cards.

Hand: (1) The thirteen cards held by one player during a deal, or any part thereof remaining unplayed; (2) one of the four players.

Honour: The five ranking cards of the trump suit or the four Aces at no-trump. *Honour-card:* Any ten or card of higher rank. *Honour-trick*: the unit by which the defensive value of a hand is estimated. *Honour-winner:* An honour-card which wins or can be counted upon to win a trick.

Jump Bid: A call higher than necessary to take out or overcall.

Lead: (1) To play the first card to a trick; (2) the card so led.

Length: A holding of four or more cards of a suit.

Level: The number of odd-tricks in the contract.

Loser: A card which may be lost to the opponents during the play.

Odd-trick: Each trick won by declarer in excess of six.

Overbid: A contract which cannot be fulfilled.

Overcall: To make a bid higher than that last made by an opponent; a bid higher, in number or in denomination, than the last bid, if it was made by an opponent.

Overtrick: Each odd-trick won by declarer in excess of his contract.

Partners: Two persons playing together for a common score.

Part-Score: (1) A contract of less than game; (2) The points earned for the making of such a contract.

Pass: A call signifying that the player does not at that time bid, double or redouble.

Penalty: (1) An advantage accruing under the laws to one side by reason of a breach of laws by the other side. (2) Points scored above the line by the defenders for setting the declarer's contract one or more tricks.

Plain Suit: A suit which is not the trump suit.

Play: (1) The period during which the cards are played in a series of tricks. This period begins when the auction closes and ends when the number of tricks won by each side is agreed upon. (2) To follow suit or discard.

Position: The place occupied by a player or by a card at the Bridge table, especially with respect to the other players or cards.

Premium Score: All points scored by either side exclusive of trick points for a made contract.

Psychic: A bid or play made for psychological effect, not justifiable by the values in the hand but designed to mislead the opponents.

Raise: (1) To support partner's bid. (2) An increase of partner's bid at the same denomination by one or more odd-tricks.

Response: A call other than a pass made by the partner of a player who has made a bid.

Revoke: Failure to play as required by or under laws of Contract Bridge when able to do so; generally, failure to follow suit when able to do so.

Rubber: The succession of hands ending when one side has won two games.

Ruff: To play a trump when a plain suit has been led.

Sacrifice: A deliberate overbid made with the intention of paying a penalty rather than permitting the opponents to obtain the contract.

Set: To defeat the opponents' contract.

Shut-out: An unnecessarily high bid, designed to make it difficult for the other side to enter the auction.

Singleton: An original holding of only one card in a suit.

Slam: A contract to take all or all but one of the tricks.

The former is a grand slam; the latter, a small slam.

Suit: The thirteen cards bearing the same type of pip—spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs.

Support: To raise. *Trump support:* A player's holding in partner's trump suit.

Take-out: A bid in a denomination other than that which one's partner has bid.

Trick: Four cards—one played from each hand. A trick begins with the lead; it is completed when each hand has played one card to it.

Trick Score: The point value of odd-tricks in the contract. Odd-trick points may be scored only by declarer's side and only if the contract is fulfilled.

Trump Suit: The suit, if any, named in the contract. Each of its cards is a trump and ranks above any card of any other suit.

Under-trick: Each trick by which declarer falls short of his contract.

Void: An original holding of no card in a suit.

Vulnerable: Exposed to higher penalties for unfulfilled contracts. The term is applied to a side which has won a game.

x: A symbol used to designate any card, usually below the ten in rank, when the denomination of the card is of no consequence.

FOR THE TIRED BUSINESS MAN

Some day I expect to turn into a Poker Moses and lead millions of husbands who are now chained, like galley slaves, to the Bridge table, into the promised land of a game in which the husband will regain his immemorial right to lose his own money without asking a special dispensation from his wife.

I observe with alarm the increasing hostility on the part of some husbands towards Bridge, on the ground that it causes too many arguments and bickerings due to a lack of benign tolerance from some womenfolk. It is characteristic of the American woman to be so intensely enthusiastic about anything she undertakes—be it a husband, a home, a social movement or a mere game—that she may become positively ferocious in her enthusiasm. And the poor husband suffers.

Granting even that the wholly self-assumed intellectual superiority of the average husband is most exasperating to any intelligent woman, and that most men do have the annoying attitude in Bridge or in life that they need not study since they have the magic touch of producing tricks out of their own mysterious inner selves, it does not follow that the hubby should be mercilessly castigated because he is found inadequate in the subtle intricacies of a mere game! Women have leisure time to study and to learn. It is too much to expect the same from the poor beast of burden who, harassed by worries of life which are more serious than the worries of a forgotten trump suit, slaves all day in the city to provide the wherewithal for the wife and the kiddies (which includes Bridge books for the wife). He cannot came home late and dead tired and become a Bridge nonpareil overnight.

In my capacity as a Bridge doctor I am often called into consultation. My advice to wives who are solicitous of real peace with their husbands is always this: Let the poor devil *alone*. Let him trump your Aces, pass your forcing take-outs, ignore your minimum responses or mistake your opening two-bid for a pure shut-out bid. After all, Bridge is not the

centre of the universe. It is only a game. When it ceases to be a game, then it is time to quit either Bridge or the husband.

For the tired business man the first glance at this book with its hundreds of pages of detailed information may be staggering. But most of these bids and plays are mere variations on one of the few underlying themes. If the casual player learns the controlling principles he can let the problems take care of themselves.

An hour now and then spent on the few pointers given in this chapter should prepare anyone within a few days to give a creditable account of himself.

Here, as briefly and as painlessly as possible, are the important things to learn:

1. WHEN TO OPEN THE BIDDING

With most hands that are strong enough to bid at all, you should bid one in a suit.

To decide whether or not you are strong enough to bid, look in your hand for *honour-tricks* and *biddable suits*.

It would be a good idea to learn the honour-trick table on pages 48-9 and the biddable suits on pages 116-18. If you have no time for so much study, remember these, the highlights of the honour-trick table:

Ace and King in the same suit are *two* honour-tricks.

An Ace is *one* honour-trick.

A King and a Queen, in the same suit or in different suits, together count *one* honour-trick.

Ace and Queen in the same suit count 1½ honour-tricks.

A King without the Ace or Queen of the same suit counts ½ honour-trick.

Two Queens in different suits or a Queen and Jack of the same suit also count ½ honour-trick.

And here are the highlights of the biddable suits:

No suit of less than four cards is biddable.

A four-card suit is biddable if it contains the Jack and at least one higher honour (*any two honours higher than the ten*).

A five-card suit is biddable if it contains the Jack or anything better.

Any six-card suit, even without a ten-spot, is a biddable suit.

Now take stock of your honour-tricks and biddable suits.

If you have three honour-tricks and any biddable suit at all, you should bid one in your biddable suit.

If you have 2½ honour-tricks and a fair five-card suit, including at least Ace-King, Ace-Queen, or any three honours (ten or higher) you may bid one in your biddable suit.

2½ honour-tricks are also enough for an opening bid if you have any six-card suit.

Resist the temptation to bid more than one at the first crack, even when your hand or your trump suit looks very strong. You can make an occasional exception if you understand *pre-emptive bids*.

And above all things, never make a bid unless you have the proper number of honour-tricks.

2. WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR PARTNER BIDS

One of the first and most important things for you to do when you sit down at a Bridge game is to tell your partner exactly how you want him to bid. Say to him, 'Yes, I play the Culbertson System, but I don't know any of the experts' fancy bids.' It might be a good idea to have a small card printed, something like a business card, and hand it to each partner just before you begin to play with him. The card would look something like this:

> I PLAY THE CULBERTSON SYSTEM. I PLAY IT ABOUT AS WELL AS FIFTEEN MILLION OF THE TWENTY MILLIONS WHO CLAIM TO PLAY IT.
> BUT
> I DON'T KNOW THE 4-5 NO-TRUMP BIDS, AND I GET MIXED UP ON TAKE-OUT DOUBLES.
> I'VE JUST BARELY HEARD ABOUT FORCING BIDS.
> HAVE MERCY ON MY SOUL.

When your partner has made an opening bid of one in a suit, look in your hand for 1½ honour-tricks. If you have 1½ honour-tricks you should make some bid, and here is what you should bid:

If you have adequate trump support, you may *raise*. Adequate trump support consists of at least Q 3 2 or any four small cards in the suit your partner has bid. To raise is to increase the number of tricks without changing his suit —for example, your partner bids one heart and you raise him by bidding two hearts.

Provided you have adequate trump support, a singleton in your hand is worth about ½ honour-trick. That is, if you have a singleton you can raise with only one honour-trick.

If you have a biddable suit of your own, even when you are able to raise you should usually bid your own suit first. But if you have to bid two in your suit, because it is lower in rank than your partner's suit, you should have a five-card suit. If you have to bid only one, a four-card suit will do.

If you can't bid a suit or give your partner a raise, but you have about 1½ honour-tricks, bid one no-trump. Do not pass your partner's one-bid unless you have less than 1½ honour-tricks.

Perhaps your hand will be stronger—it will have 2½ or more honour-tricks. In this case you may *jump*. That is, if your hand calls for a no-trump bid you may bid two no-trump instead of one no-trump, and if your hand calls for a raise, you may bid three of your partner's suit instead of two. But do not jump an extra trick higher in a new suit, unless you are sure of making game. Here is how you estimate the chances for making game:

3. HOW FAR TO GO IN BIDDING

Altogether the four players at the table have about eight honour-tricks in their hands. Every time a hand is played, thirteen tricks are won and lost by somebody and only eight of them are won with honour-tricks. The other five are won with lower cards. The ratio of tricks won with honours to tricks won with lower cards is therefore about 8 to 5.

If you know how many honour-tricks you and your partner together hold, you can expect to win in all about half as many more tricks with lower cards. Boiled down it comes to this:

If you and your partner together have 4-4½ honour-tricks, you will make a contract of about one in a suit or in no-

trump. With 5 or 5½ honour-tricks you will make about 2 no-trump or two or three in a suit. With 6-6½ honour-tricks you will probably make a game in your best suit or in no-trump.

Here is how you can tell how many honour-tricks are held in your and partner's hands combined:

Any opening suit-bid of one can be depended upon to show about three honour-tricks. If your partner bids one in a suit and you have 1½ honour-tricks, you add your partner's 3 to your 1½, getting a total of 4½.

When you have bid and your partner has responded you count your own honour-tricks, add your partner's, and again you have a good estimate of the total.

Remember two things: your partner's opening bid may show more than three honour-tricks—that is the reason you give him another chance to bid when you hold only 1½ yourself.

And your partner's response to your opening bid may show more than 1½ honour-tricks; you already know that if it is a jump raise or a jump rebid in no-trump it shows at least 2½ honour-tricks.

When your combined total of honour-tricks is not enough to make a game, you should stop bidding as soon as possible unless your partner has made a forcing bid.

4. FORCING BIDS

When your partner makes a forcing bid, you must not pass. You have to bid again. Here is how you recognize a forcing bid:

A jump bid of *exactly one trick* more than necessary is known as 'forcing to game'. When your partner jumps in responding to your opening bid you must bid again, and you must keep on bidding every time it comes your turn until you have arrived at a contract of three no-trump, four in a major suit or five in a minor, at which point you may pass. Listen to the bidding carefully and notice when a jump bid is made. Be very careful not to confuse these forcing bids with jump bids of *more* than one trick. For example, if you bid one diamond and your partner now bids three clubs, it is a forcing bid to game, for your partner could have bid two clubs.

Any bid in a new suit, if you or your partner opened the bidding, is forcing for one round. You have to bid something the next time it is your turn to bid, but after that you may pass if you think a game cannot be made—unless your partner makes another forcing bid. There are a few exceptions to these forcing bids, which you can look up in Chapter XII.

When your partner opens the bidding with two in a suit, it is one of the most important of the game-forcing bids. You must not pass at any time before you have arrived at a game contract. Be careful to notice whether your partner's two-bid is the opening bid (in which case it is forcing) or is made after the bidding has already been opened. There is all the difference in the world.

When your partner's bid of two in a suit is a genuine opening forcing bid, look in your hand and see if you have an honour-trick. If you haven't, bid two no-trump (remember you can't pass). If you have the honour-trick, you can bid a biddable suit of your own or raise if you have adequate trump support.

Opening bids of three and four are higher bids than the opening two-bid but nevertheless do not show strong hands. These bids are not forcing and may be passed.

5. NO-TRUMP

An opening one no-trump bid is reserved for a particular type of hand. Instead of looking for honour-tricks and biddable suits, you look for honour-tricks and distribution.

Your distribution must be 4-3-3-3—four cards in one of the suits and three in each of the others.

You must have four or five honour-tricks, and you must have some strength in at least three of the suits.

If your partner bids one no-trump, look for two honour-tricks and if you have them raise him to two no-trump. If you have only one honour-trick but a five-card biddable suit, bid the suit.

An opening two no-trump bid is not forcing as a suit two-bid is.

But if your partner bids two no-trump you don't need much to raise. Just one Ace, or one King—or a couple of Queens and a hope.

6. WHEN AN OPPONENT OPENS THE BIDDING

When an opponent bids first, you know he has at least three honour-tricks. If you bid with too weak a hand you are taking a chance on being doubled and set badly. Even a tired business man should play safe. So turn to Chapter XXVIII and find out what the Rule of 2 and 3 is.

If your partner immediately doubles the opponents' opening bid, it is usually a *take-out double*. He means that he wants you to show your best suit. Your best suit may be only four low cards in a totally worthless hand, but you have to bid anyway. And even if you think you haven't any best suit, look until you find one and bid something. This is very important. Don't worry about how weak your hand is—when your partner tells you to bid he must have a strong hand and can take care of the situation. But if you have already made a bid, and he doubles, you should pass.

7. SLAMS

For the time being the Direct Method of Slam Bidding, explained in Chapter XXV, will be sufficient. Little by little, you will find yourself wondering, on strong hands, whether a slam can be made; and you will find yourself visualizing the kinds of honour-tricks your partner can hold to make the slam possible. Then you will find it profitable—and easy—to learn about the 4-5 No-trump Convention, which so precisely locates the exact cards that you need for your slam.

8. WATCH YOUR SCORE

You don't really have to know how to score but you have to watch it. This is not to keep you from being cheated but so that you can tell how the game is getting along. You should know who is vulnerable and particularly you should know whenever you have a part-score. Game is 100 points below the line and if, for example, you already have 30 on the score, you can stop at two no-trump and make game instead of going to three no-trump; you can stop at three hearts and make game instead of going to four hearts.

9. LEADS AND PLAY

It is important to know what to lead and what your

partner's lead shows. In leading a suit, you should usually lead the highest card from a sequence of three cards such as K Q J; from a long suit not headed by a sequence you should lead the fourth highest card. With a suit headed by both Ace and King, your first lead is the King. In trying to win a trick, play the lowest card with which the trick can be won.

It is a good idea to look at the table of leads on pages 512 and 513-14, and it is also a good idea, if you have time, to glance at Chapters XLII and XLVI and find out what to think about when you play a hand. Then your natural intelligence will assert itself.

10. FINAL ADVICE

With all due modesty, I can honestly advise you to get a copy of *Culbertson's Self-Teacher*. It contains the important details of the game broken up into easy lessons. After each lesson there is a practice drill of the 'Ask me another' type that makes it fun to learn.

And in *Culbertson's Summary of Bids and Leads*, all bids and plays are listed simply and clearly, in tabulated form for quick reference.

But the best way of all is to take lessons from a competent, *certified*, Bridge teacher.

CONTENTS

BOOK I

BIDDING

Card Sense is usually spoken of as one of the mysterious minor talents, an innate knack of grasping easily and applying in practice the logic of playing situations. Cards do have an inner logic and form a bizarre world governed by their own inexorable laws. But I do not believe in an innate faculty called Card Sense. Certainly a man is not born with an invisible deck of cards in the convolutions of his brain. Card Sense is largely an understanding of the spirit of cards, their remarkable structure and the few underlying principles that make up Contract Bridge.

CHAPTER I

THE BIDDING PROCESS AND ITS GOALS

The road to the best final bid is strewn with the bones and the mistakes of millions of pasteboard soldiers. Their commanders--in-chief, the players, are to be sympathized with rather than condemned. The strategical possibilities of this fascinating intellectual game are practically unlimited. Simple enough for a grown-up child and yet deep enough for a demigod, it has this in common with the strategy of actual warfare (which it so strikingly resembles in many other particulars): the side that makes the fewer blunders is victorious.

The blunders which in Bridge may keep the player from the best final bid are his sins of commission and omission in *bidding*.

THE THREE MUSKETEERS OF BIDDING

Bidding is a complex process consisting of *Valuation*, *Information* and *Strategy*. The object of bidding is to select the best final bid for the partnership hands. The Final Bid may be a premium at partner's or one's own bid or a penalty against the opponents' bid.

The Three Musketeers of bidding—Valuation, Information and Strategy—are practically inseparable. Without precise information, valuation of hands is reduced to crude guess-work, or at best must lean heavily on the crutches of vague mathematical 'averages'; without strategy (and strategy includes psychology) bidding becomes a parade of wooden soldiers.

VALUATION

Valuation is the count of winners and losers in a player's own hand as well as in partnership and opponents' hands.

In the case of partner's or opponents' hands, valuation is tantamount to *placing* of suit-lengths and honour-strength. Valuation (taking stock of the hand, is the first step in the process of bidding and has its parallel in the play of the

cards, where the actual play is always preceded by making a plan.

INFORMATION OR PARTNERSHIP LANGUAGE

Information or partnership language consists of positive and negative inferences gathered from the *kind* (opening, secondary, shut-out bid, and so forth) and *level* (one-odd, two-odd and so forth) of the bid made.

Many of the more common or more important inferences have developed into bidding conventions which are nothing but crystallized inferences. Usually a convention, a method or a rule, expresses in a brief, summarized statement the chain of inferences underlying the best way to treat a bidding situation. A very small number of conventions are 'artificial' in the sense that they do not spring naturally from the logic of the bidding situation but are an *agreement* between partners (of course with the full knowledge of the opponents) that a certain bid shall have a special meaning. It is impossible to play Contract without some minimum of conventions, especially in slam bidding. And persons who claim they 'play no conventions' either play bumble-puppy Bridge or do play conventions that are tacitly understood. You need a system for everything—to cross a street, write a book, woo a girl or run a country. Bridge players who claim to play no system usually have a stubborn little system clogged in their subconscious minds, picked up at random from the hands they have played or observed. A real system is built with a long-range view across the millions of possible hands.[1]

A Bridge system is a unified body of Bridge knowledge consisting of principles, methods, conventions or rules which

[1] The Asking Bids, for instance, on page 308, a new and dramatic way of reaching successful slams, required two years to develop. A special library of several thousand hands of the slam type, representing in concentrated form the lifetime experience of players, was used by the author and his associates. They were subsequently released to expert players through the *Bridge World Magazine*, New York, and then to the public at large. The public in two more years proved that Asking Bids, despite their technical excellence, could not become popular with the average player. Thereupon the Asking Bids were relegated to a few pages of this book and are now recommended only for expert partnerships.

are logically connected. There are but two or three really different systems of Bridge. Simply because a player changes the meaning of a few bids he does not play a different system. To call it so is to admit ignorance of both Bridge and the English language.

STRATEGY

Most of the common rules and conventions of Bridge are simply a kind of rifle and bayonet drill which serves as an introduction to the higher art of bidding strategy.

I am very much tempted to define strategy in Bridge as *the art of defeating the adversaries' superior hands.* This is the essence and reason for strategy. Anyone can score victories with good partners and obvious power-houses: it takes a strategist to turn apparent defeat into victory with poor partners or inferior hands. In the historic battle of Strategy against Blind Luck, strategy must win. The enemy's greater resources and numbers are thus controlled by a player's superior technique, character and psychology.

Unfortunately, this definition of strategy is too narrow and leaves out, at least explicitly, partnership psychology and strategy of big hands. For instance, it is a great and difficult art to play with one's partners. Only a true strategist multiplied by ten diplomats can manage the motley assortment of humanity facing him. He must adapt himself to their mental and emotional level and inspire them to new heights by browbeating, coaxing or cajoling them somewhat in the manner of a Russian peasant driving a stubborn donkey: now he prods his rear with a stick and now he dangles a sack of oats in front but just out of the donkey's reach. Strategy is as indispensable to the handling of pasteboard freaks as to the handling of human freaks if one wishes to find himself on the right side of any swing hand.

The Bridge strategist must face two fronts simultaneously; he must co-ordinate his bidding with his partner's in order to select the best possible bid from the available resources of each deal; at the same time he must face the strenuous opposition of the adversaries, guard himself and partner against their stragems and try to out-manœuvre them in the struggle for the best bid.

Bidding strategy, therefore, should be properly defined as the art of selecting the best bid and forcing its acceptance on the adversaries.

To put it another way, in bidding strategy there are two main currents: the first is the strategy of Manœuvre, consisting of strategic methods or the system of bidding, leading to the discovery of the best bid; and the second is the strategy of Psychology. The former organizes (by means of carefully analysed and tested technique of bidding) the *material* resources of the hands; the latter co-ordinates the bidding with the *human* factor of personal equations, trying to anticipate partner's and adversaries' mental reactions to various bidding moves and thus fit the hands within the framework of partner's and opponents' psychology.

THE STRATEGY OF MANŒUVRE

The strategy of Manœuvre is so all-embracing that it is practically synonymous with bidding itself. Strategy permeates every bid. The making of a bid not only includes, as indispensable preliminaries, the factors of valuation and partnership language, but must be balanced against the factors of Scoring, Probabilities, Distribution and, of course, the personal equation. It also includes a number of bidding or strategic methods carefully analysed in theory and tested in practice and designed to cope scientifically with the more important bidding situations. In other words, strategy begins perhaps several years in *advance* of making the actual bid. The 'intuitive' school notwithstanding, it is practically impossible adequately to cope with most of the important bidding situations on the spur of the moment.

Take even a simple strategical situation; say you hold

♠ K J 10 8 7 5 3 2 ♥ — ♦ J 10 6 4 ♣ 7

The proper bid, as dealer, on this hand is four spades right off the reel. It is a purely strategic bid and an attempt to prevent the enemy, even at a sacrifice, from finding a more profitable bid in their own hands, which they might have succeeded in doing if they were allowed to exchange information at lower levels of bidding. But such a bid of four spades is meaningless to partner unless he understands its underlying strategy.

The master player does not, as is commonly believed,

break rules right and left, indulging in fantastic flights of fancy. On the contrary, a greater part of his strategy consists in following the proper strategical methods which are thought out long in advance. Right here I would like to squelch once and for all the recurrent claim that I do not play my own rules and system. I emphatically do follow the system because I believe it represents the best technique and strategy *from the standpoint of experts* thus far developed. When a better system is built I shall follow it or borrow from it.[1]

Strategic principles and methods should be slightly modified to fit the peculiarities of individual hands and also to satisfy the urgent psychological considerations, which are also part of strategy. But no rules are broken unless they be simple helping rules for the beginner. In my opinion, the greatness of Napoleon's military strategy did not lie so much in the brilliant *coups* executed at the battlefields, as in the marvellously co-ordinated and thought-out *routine* of his strategical methods which made the execution of his coups possible. He was great because his strategic *system* was superior to that of opposing generals.

By means of strategic methods and conventions of bidding, the player anticipates the various types of hands that may be dealt and bidding eventualities that may arise; he now finds himself prepared to meet them, not in a superficial helter-skelter manner, but scientifically. This same *anticipation* or looking ahead before bidding and play is one of the basic, strategic habits to acquire.

Before I make a bid I anticipate partner's possible response as well as opponents' possible course of action. I then ask myself, what will happen to me if and if and if. Not too

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1 Good ideas are the property of all. I have always welcomed any author who thought kindly enough of my ideas to borrow them even though at times no credit was given or they were disguised under a new label. I always thought "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." I wish, here, to acknowledge my indebtedness to other authors such as Messrs. Sims, Lenz, Jacoby and many others from whose gardens I have plucked many luscious fruits in building the New Culbertson System. It is my job and duty to take the best from any system and present it to my Bridge-loving friends.

many 'ifs'—I may become, pardon this pitiful pun, 'if-meshed'—but a couple of 'ifs' anyway.

One of the important differences between a good player and a dud is that the former treats his bids of any specific deal as a strategical whole in which each bid plays a logical role supporting other bids so that he finds himself prepared for more important future eventualities; the beginner treats each bid as an isolated, complete event in itself, blissfully oblivious of dire events to come, perhaps at the next corner.

That part of strategy which deals with psychological factors is treated in detail elsewhere (Chapter XXXV). Here, I will point out only that strategy must not be confused with stratagems, as it sometimes is. A stratagem is an artifice or trick designed to outwit the adversary. The new Culbertson System is full of effective trap bids and plays (effective except when indulged in by fancy Felixes and smart Aleck strategists), but such stratagems play the same role in Bridge strategy as an ambush plays in a sweeping strategic manœuvre of war masses.

Strategy in bidding finds its counterpart in the tactics of play. In Bridge the actual battle starts with the opening lead and the dummy is the battlefield. It was the object of bidding strategy to select the most favourable combination or bid; it is now the object of playing tactics to make the most of the situation. To use a military analogy, bidding is strategy, a series of planned manœuvres to secure the best position (contract); while play is the actual battle or tactical execution of the planned campaign. To continue this analogy, just as in war many battles are actually lost before they even begin because of poor strategy, so in Bridge many hands are irretrievably compromised by inferior bidding before a single card is led.

Strategy, as well as partnership language and valuation, revolves around tricks.

TRICKS

In Bridge, 'tricks of the trade' are tricks. Only Aces and top sequences are dealt ready-made; all other trick values must first be established or 'refined' from the suits of various

lengths in which the tricks are embedded and which are their raw material.

The true nature and behaviour of a trick is still a mystery even to most advanced players, for there is nothing more tricky than a trick. There are even more ways of getting tricks out of suits than of skinning a cat.

A player would be overwhelmed with their number and variety if it were not for the basic fact that there are only three different *kinds* of tricks and that all plays (and consequently all bids) are reduced to these three units of measure:

1. Honour-tricks, made with cards of high rank.
2. Low cards established from four-card or longer suits. They are called *long* cards.
3. Ruffs, called *ruffers*, obtained by ruffing (usually in the dummy) a losing card with an otherwise worthless trump.

At no-trump bids there are only two kinds of tricks, honour and long cards. At trump bids we have the same honour and low-card tricks of long suits; in addition, a new kind of trick, the ruffer, makes its appearance.

♠ A K Q 4 3 2 ♥ A 5 3 ♦ A K ♣ K Q	N W E S	♠ 8 7 6 5 ♥ 6 ♦ 6 5 3 2 ♣ 10 8 7 6

In this example, if spades are trumps West will win the following tricks: he will win honour-tricks with the ♠ A K Q, ♥ Ace and ♦ A K. He will lose a trick to the opponents' ♣ Ace but will then win another honour-trick with his remaining club. His two small hearts he will lead and trump with East's spades, creating ruffing tricks. Finally, when he has led his three high spades neither opponent can have another spade and the ♠ 4 3 2 will be long cards.

If the bid is no-trump, West will still win his seven tricks with high cards and he will still win his three long cards in spades, but there will be no ruffers because there is no trump suit and the two small hearts he must lose to the opponents.

A player is thus equipped for attack or defence with three different weapons. Because each of these weapons is drastically different from the others, *each will require a specialized technique of handling during the bidding or play.*

It follows that all the rules, methods, and conventions of bidding and play are grouped around the three different kinds of tricks. For instance, the main object in the partnership language of bidding is to convey to partner inferences about honour strength, suit lengths and distribution of the hand (ruffers). Accordingly, you have bidding conventions that show the honour strength of the hand; other conventions that indicate the length of suits; and a third family of conventions to show voids and singletons. Information about the minimum number of honour-tricks held is conveyed by distinguishing between opening and other types of bids; while the trump length is indicated according to whether the suit is bid once or rebid.

SCORING AND THE OBJECTS OF SCIENTIFIC BIDDING[1]

In Bridge the bids are measured with tricks but paid for in points. *Points* are therefore the stakes for which we play in Bridge and the final criterion of bidding strategy and methods.

The bid that will secure the greatest number of points is the *best final bid*. It does not matter whether those points are secured by scoring game or rubber at one's own bid or by scoring an equivalent penalty against the opponents. In fact, it is preferable, as a rule, to take the penalty rather than a game or rubber even when the expected penalty is slightly below the value of the game.

When the opponents have entered the bidding, the question of what bid in the partnership hands is the best depends entirely upon what the opponents could score at their own declaration. Your best contract, for instance, may easily be a sacrifice of 500 points, if by so doing you can compel the opponents to give up their vulnerable game. The yard-stick therefore, by which the partnership's expected gain or loss is measured, is the point value of the contract which you can make, or the contract which the opponents can make against you. If you can score 120 points for making four spades, and the game which you can win is worth 300 points, your total

[1] Here I can give only the sketchiest of descriptions of the all-important question of mathematics of scoring. (See Mathematics of Scoring in Book II.)

gain at your own bid will be 420 points. If instead of bidding you double the opponents and defeat them 300 points, you have *lost* 120 points. If you defeat them 500 points, you have gained 80 points, for at your own bid you could have made only 420.

Thus the advice "watch the score" is of far less importance than the advice to watch for the mathematical realities *behind* the score sheet.

The equity values of games are as follows:

Any first game	300 points
Any second game in succession (when opponents have no game)	400 ,,
Any third game	500 ,,

To these invisible equity values add the points for tricks, overtricks and honours, if any. For instance, if you make the first game at three no-trump, your actual gain is 400 points —300 for the equity value and 100 for the three tricks.

Game and not rubber is the *strategic unit* in bidding and it is against the full game value that the enemy's bids are measured. Thus, the best final bid is selected not merely from the partnership but from the four hands around the table.

It follows that the mathematical ratios in premiums and penalties automatically determine *bidding aims*.

First Object: *Penalties* from opponents which are either equivalent to or greater than the points which could be scored at one's own bids. However, when the partnership side is vulnerable and opponents are not vulnerable, the chance of setting them at least three tricks should be accepted instead of a game (but not instead of a slam).

Second Object: *Slam premiums*, failing which, *a game*. If game is too distant, a part-score (worth roughly 150 points counting the trick value) should by no means be despised.

Third Object: *Sacrifice Bidding*. When neither a penalty nor a game at one's own bid seems likely, there still remains a powerful objective: to push the opponents to an unmakable contract or to force them to accept a penalty roughly equal to, or less than, the trick score they could have made.

Underlying all objects of bidding we find the *Principle of Safety* requiring that no bid should be made that, under

reasonable conditions, risks an excessive penalty. Safety in bidding is explained in Book II.

THE STRUCTURE OF A BID

Bidding and play are not two radically distinct departments of the game, as is commonly believed. They are two different ways of *playing* the same hand. In order to reach the decision that led to the bid of three no-trump, for instance, I must *mentally* play out the hand at three no-trump, using roughly the *same technique of play as though the dummy lay actually exposed before my eyes*. During the bidding I combine my own hand with partner's *unseen* hand as imaginary dummy, place in the opponents' hands the values shown by their bids and 'play out' the combined hands at a given bid. The final bid is simply an architect's finished drawing, according to which the player contracts to build his plays in combined hands.

Or it might be said that bidding is a *prediction* that a number of tricks as predicted by the final bid will be made in actual play. A good bidder is a good prophet.

Bidding, therefore, is *mental play* where the same kinds of tricks are won or lost in the player's mind as with the exposed dummy, so that each deal of the cards is played twice —the first time during the bidding, but with abstract *ghost* tricks, and the second time with their concrete counterpart, the physical tricks. The bidding trick may, therefore, be defined as an abstract playing trick or an expected winner.

Although the only real difference from physical play is that this 'bidding play' is mental, abstract—a sort of dress rehearsal for the real show that is to come, and requiring the player to train himself to a sort of Bridge shadow-boxing —it must be remembered that the dummy is not visible and that the bidder must piece together the imaginary dummy's honour-strength and various suit lengths from partner's or opponents' bids.

To help partner locate the missing pieces in the puzzle of the combined hands is the object of partnership bidding.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the play of the hand is the beginning and the end of all bidding. The better the player, the more precise his bidding.

CHAPTER II

BIDDING VALUATION

In order to sell a hand at the Bridge auction for the best price in the constantly fluctuating market of bids and counterbids around the table, the player must know its trick-taking values.

The first thing a player does after picking up his hand is to take stock of the kind and the number of tricks that Chance has allotted to him. The honour and length bidding values, which are more or less expected to reproduce themselves in the play as actual tricks, are called *winners* or bidding tricks.

Bidding valuation can be defined as the *count of expected winners and losers at a specified bid.*

After the player has appraised the value of his own hand he communicates the good or bad news to his partner, awaiting his reply. Until he hears from his partner (or opponents) there are many elements about his own hand of which he is either ignorant or uncertain. He does not know, for instance, the number of supporting trumps and the total honour strength of partner's hand. The inferences drawn from his partner's and opponents' bids will throw new light upon the winners and losers in the player's own hand. It will enable him to *revalue* his hand and begin the second stage of valuation, which is called Combined Valuation and which consists in counting the expected winners and losers at a specified bid in the *combined* hands.

The object of single valuation is to determine the total *net worth* of the player's own hand. The net worth of any hand is determined by *assuming that all the important cards outstanding against the player's hand are held by the opponents*, and therefore counting as *losers* any card or combination of cards that is not a sure or a probable winner. The worth of the following hand is five sure winners, leaving eight losers:

♠ K Q J 10 9 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ 7 2

To avoid hopeless confusion, a player must first find out

the net worth of his own hand. To this he may add values *already shown* by partner. He may then bid for only the number of tricks warranted by the known total value of the combined hands. If he bids on values he has merely *assumed* that his partner holds, it will result in duplication of bidding. Partner cannot be expected to know that his hand has already been bid for him; and, seeing these same values, will make further bids on them, forcing the combined hands to a contract beyond their reach.

Bidding valuation at a trump is also quite different from no-trump.[1] While the same honour and length winners are counted at each, at the former there is a special count of the trump suit and of ruffers in the expected dummy.

THE THREE-WAY VALUATION OF THE SAME HAND

The total number of tricks or winners in the same hand increases or decreases according to whether the trump bid is *the player's own*, or in *support* of partner's bid, or has been made by the opponents.

	♠ 9 4 ♥ K Q 10 7 4 2 ♦ A Q ♣ 5 3 2	
♠ Q 10 5 3 ♥ J 8 ♦ 9 6 3 ♣ J 10 8 4	N W E S	♠ 7 2 ♥ 6 ♦ K J 10 7 4 ♣ A K Q 9 7
	♠ A K J 8 6 ♥ A 9 5 3 ♦ 8 5 2 ♣ 6	

In this example South can make eight tricks at his own spade bid. In support of his partner's heart bid there is a tremendous total of twelve tricks resulting in a slam—a significant lesson to selfish ones who always try to play their own hands. Against the opponents' club bid the value of the combined North-South hands suffers a terrific drop from a

[1] For no-trump valuation, see Chapter VIII.

total of twelve tricks at hearts to a total of four tricks—the two top spades and the red Aces.

It seems almost as though the very spots on the faces of the cards were changed. Wall Street, in its wildest days of panic, does not approach such violent fluctuations of values as shown by a Bridge hand every time the bidding shifts from declarer to partner's or opponents' hands and before the final bid closes the day.

It follows that the hand must be valued in *three* ways, and possesses two standards of values:

The value in *attack*—when played at one's own or partner's trump bid.

The value in *defence*—when played against the opponents' trump bid.

CHAPTER III

HONOUR-TRICKS

Many honour combinations in side suits that are perfectly good winners at a partnership's own bids, cease to exist when running the gauntlet of the enemy's trump suit.

The third lead of any side suit is quite likely to be trumped, so that a sequence like A K Q J 10 2, *defensively speaking*, is worth only a 'plus' more than A K 5 4 3 2. At your own bid the former suit will win six tricks and the latter but four or five.

This imposes a double standard of values even with honours: in attack, and in defence.

In *attack*, i.e., at declarer's own or in support of partner's trump bids, the honours are counted at their *full playing value*.

In defence, only the cream of honour-sequences is skimmed.

A *defensive* honour-trick or *defensive* winner is a card or combination of cards which may be expected to win a trick, even against the opponents' trump contract.[1]

Not only Ace-Kings and Ace-King-Queens are counted defensively, but Kings, Queens, Jacks and even tens can be combined to form defensive combinations. The very first trick can eliminate four top cards, promoting a ten to the position of first rank, and giving some hopes even to a nine-spot.

In the flux of constantly changing values of long and short suits, the defensive winners are the one relatively stable element. They are the cash, liquid assets of the hand, the gold standard of the Culbertson System. They furnish quick entries into partner's hand and at least a few always survive the worst distributional storms in the hands. This yardstick

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[1] Throughout this book the term 'honour-trick' or 'defensive winner' is restricted to defensive honour-tricks. When required to speak about honour-tricks in general (in declarer's or supporting hands) the term 'honour-winner' will be used.

does even more. Since the best top layers of the four suits are the defensive tricks, it becomes possible to gauge at a glance the approximate trick-winning expectancies not only against opponents' trump bids, but at partnership's own bids and at no-trump. The Culbertson table of honour-tricks given on the next two pages is standard and official with more than twenty million players throughout the world. It completely covers the entire range of defensive honour values from an Ace-King-Queen down to isolated Queens, Jacks and tens. Years of tests have proven that it is simple and uncanny in its accuracy, while remaining flexible.

Revaluation of Defensive Winners: The honour-tricks in the table which follows are based on the 'finesse' and 'defensive' value of honours:

(1) The assumption that missing honours, if any, are held by the opponents and that their exact position is unknown.

(2) The assumption that the distribution of suits is not so freakish that honours are likely to be ruffed.

Accordingly, information disclosed during the bidding on the position of outstanding honours and on suit-lengths will modify the defensive values of honours.

SURE, PROBABLE AND 'PLUS' HONOUR-WINNERS

Some bidding values, such as an Ace, are reasonably certain; others, such as K x are half-way probable; still others, such as Q x or Q x x are mere embryonic tricks. Accordingly, all winners are graded into *full* tricks, *half* tricks and *plus* values. The figure '1' roughly indicates a full trick; the figure '½' means a *probable* winner; and '+' means a value somewhere between zero and one-half.

Most honour combinations depend on finesses for their definite values. For instance, A Q may take two tricks or it may make but one trick, depending on the favourable or unfavourable *position* of the missing King, the chances of which are roughly equal. It is worth, therefore, 1½ bidding tricks; K x in a suit is worth ½ trick. A couple of K x's are worth one 'sure' trick, equivalent to one Ace or a K Q. The word 'sure trick' is used rather euphemistically, for there is only one thing which is sure in Bridge and that is that the loser must pay.

CULBERTSON STANDARD TABLE OF HONOUR-TRICKS

Defensive Winners Against Opponents' Bids

A K	(Ace and King of the same suit)		
A K Q	(Ace, King and Queen of the same suit)	2+ honour-tricks	**2** honour-tricks
A K J	(Ace, King and Jack of the same suit)		
A Q	(Ace and Queen of the same suit)		
A Q J	(Ace, Queen and Jack of the same suit)	1½+honour-tricks	**1½** honour-tricks
K Q J	(King, Queen and Jack of the same suit)		
Ace	(Any Ace, with or without low cards of the same suit)		
A J 10 / **A J x**	(Ace, Jack and one low card in the same suit)	1+	
K Q	(King and Queen of the same suit)		
K x and Q x	(King with one or more low cards in one suit, and Queen with one or more low cards in another suit)		**1** honour-trick
K J x and Q x	(King, Jack and one or more low cards in one suit, and Queen with one or more low cards in another suit)	1+honour-trick	
K J 10	(King, Jack and ten of the same suit)		
K x	(King with one or more low cards of the same suit)		**½** honour-trick
K J x	(King, Jack and one or more low cards of the same suit)	½+	
Q J x	(Queen, Jack, and one or more low card of the same suit)		
King alone	Also, Queen in A K Q Jack in A K J, A Q J, A J x or K J x		**+** (plus values)
Q x **J 10 x** **J x and J x**	A 'plus value' is about ¼ of an honour-trick. Do not count quarter-tricks, but value any two plus values as ½ honour-trick		

CULBERTSON STANDARD TABLE OF HONOUR-TRICKS

Trick Winners at Own or Partner's Bid

Defensive Value		*Playing Value*	*Defensive Value*		*Playing Value*
2	A K	2	1	K Q	1
1½	A Q	1½	½	K J	½+
1	A J	1+	+	Q J	½
2+	A K Q	3	1½	K Q J	2
2+	A K J	2½	1	K Q 10	1½
1½+	A Q J	2+	1	K Q x	1+
1½	A Q 10	1½+	1	K J 10	1+
1+	A J 10	1½	½+	K J x	1
1+	A J x	1+	½	Q J x	½+
½	Q J 10	1	+	Q 10 x	½
2+	A K Q J	4	1½	K Q J 10	3
2+	A K Q 10	3½+	1	K J 10 9	2+
2+	A K J 10	3½	½	Q J 10 9	2
1½+	A Q J 10	3+	+	J 10 9 8	1
1½	A J 10 9	2½	+	J 10 x x	½+

These valuations include every card, and no addition is to be made because of the four-card length. Any other card held with the above four-card combinations may be valued as one full winner.

INCREASED VALUE OF HONOURS

The following honours and honour-combinations gain value as winners depending on partner's bids:

Defensive Value	*Honour*	*In Partner's Bid Suit*	*In Partner's Rebid Suit*	*When Partner Has Bid No-trump or Made a Take-out Double*
1	Ace	1	1	1
½	King	1	1	1
+	Queen	½	1	½
+	Q J	1	1	1
+	J 10	½	½	½
less than +	J x	+	½	+

With all such finessable values the player must keep in mind the necessity of an entry in partner's hand. The A K J is worth 2½ honour-winners if the bidding shows that there is reason to expect an entry into partner's hand. Without entries the most powerful of hands are reduced to their bare sure trick values. For instance, ♠ A Q 10 ♥ K J 9 7 ♦ A Q 10 ♣ A 4 2 may take only the three Aces if there is no entry to dummy and the player has to lead away from all the ten-aces.

A Queen with one or more small cards, a lonesome King and, in a punch, Jack-ten, are *plus values*. This important group of remote bidding tricks is situated between a near zero and a probable trick. I would be tempted to call the plus value ¼ of a trick except that I have a horror of small mathematical fractions in Bridge. They are usually so monstrously over-precise that they become grossly inexact. Too weak to justify even the chance expectancy of a trick, the 'plus' values when taken in the aggregate become very important. Two such plus values, say a couple of Queens or a lone King with Q x in another suit, are worth *at least* ½ a trick, for in most cases I would rather have a couple of Queens than K x. They should be always counted in the hand whether in defence or in attack.

Below this group of 'plus' values or intermediate values there is still another group called the *minor intermediate* values, or 'fillers'. These fillers consist of isolated Jacks, tens and even nines.[1] They are too indefinite and variable to be counted even as remote tricks, and taken separately they are nuances. But their accumulated weight is of great importance and, together with 'plus' values, accounts for the difference between a hand with 'shape' to it and one that looks skinny.

THE EQUIVALENCE OF HONOUR VALUES

This grading of bidding honour values into sure, probable

[1] A nine, technically speaking, is not an honour card but does in many cases become a ranking card. For instance, when the A, K, Q and J are eliminated by coverage, the nine will control the third round of the suit.

and remote tricks enables the player to determine at a glance the *total honour strength* of any hand.

For all practical purposes of bidding Q J x is equivalent to K x of another suit and both are equivalent to an Ace or K Q; similarly, an Ace is equivalent to a K Q and together they are equivalent to an A K. The reader must be warned, however, that this basic principle of equivalence is not meant to be applied too rigidly and must be liberally strewn with 'abouts' and 'roughly'.

There is another important reservation. As between two equivalent values, *the one containing more face cards is more valuable* especially in attack. For instance, Q J x with its two face cards is somewhat more valuable than K x. It may promote more tricks when combined with partner's hand. And J 10 8 2 (worth one winner) may easily spread out to two winners if partner holds the Queen.

EFFECT OF BIDDING INFORMATION

As the bidding is unfolded, and the player learns more and more about the position and distribution of the unknown key cards and suit lengths, his original assumptions from the Standard Table will be confirmed or modified.

For instance:

♠ K x is worth ½ trick if the position of the ♠ Ace is unknown.
♠ K x is worth one trick if partner bids one spade.
♠ K x is worth *more* than ½ trick if spades are bid at the right.
♠ K x is worth *less* than ½ trick if spades are bid at the left.
♥ A K Q 9 2, originally valued at 2-plus defensive tricks, becomes worth three defensive tricks if partner repeatedly denies the suit.
♥ A K Q 9 2 will be worth two and probably but one defensive trick if partner vigorously supports the heart suit and when opponents bid up strongly in their own suit.

THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE DEFENSIVE TABLE

The practical application of the Defensive Table comes up at every stage of bidding. It enables the player to estimate:

(1) The limit of the opponents' trump contract.

(2) The exact value of the hand when average, below or above average.

(3) The balance of strength in partner's and opponents' hands at any bid (Rule of Eight).

(4) The game, slam or no-game expectancy at partnership's own bids (Rule of Eight).

DEFENSIVE VALUATION OF OPPONENTS' TRUMP BIDS

In order that he may estimate the probable limits of the opponents' trump bid for the purposes of the penalty double and sacrifice overbids, the player should:

(1) Add the number of honour-tricks as shown by or inferred from partner to his own honour and trump tricks; and

(2) Subtract the total from 13.

The result is the approximate maximum number of tricks available to the opponents.

TRUMP TRICKS

Honour tricks in side suits are valued at their defensive value but the trump tricks in a players own hand are valued at their expected *playing* value. For instance, if the opponents are bidding spades, ♠ Q J 10 3 are worth two winners; ♠ Q 10 9 6 can be valued as two tricks, if the trump bid is on the right and the bidder's partner repeatedly denies the suit.

THE AVERAGE HAND AND ITS WORTH

The following is a perfectly average hand from the standpoint of honours and honour-tricks:

♠ A 7 3 ♥ K 10 6 2 ♦ Q 9 5 ♣ J 8 4

It contains an Ace, a King, a Queen, a Jack and a ten, or exactly ¼ of all the honours. Because *too* average, such a hand is one of the rarest events in Bridge. It is a purely abstract hand, something like the imaginary line of the Equator. Practically, however, this ideal average hand is of great value in serving as a *line of demarcation* between millions of hands below and above the average in honour strength. On

the basis of the Table of Honour-tricks, a perfectly average hand is worth 2 honour-tricks plus a Jack and ten, almost 2-plus tricks. The Jack and ten barely miss being plus values. Since all defensive honour values are interchangeable, we have a working equivalent of the average hand in terms of honour tricks. A hand which is a Queen better than the average is worth about 2½ honour-tricks.

This basic assumption of the average hand furnishes the player with a remarkable yardstick for measuring the relative honour strength of any hand and, by means of the widely known Rule of Eight defined below, will assist materially in estimating the game, slam or part-score expectancy of any bid.

THE RULE OF EIGHT

The defensive honour-tricks control the first two top leads or rounds and possibly the third lead of each of the four suits. Since each suit is worth 2-plus to 2½ defensive honour-tricks, the deck contains about 8 + + + + honour-tricks, i.e. between 8 and 9 honour-tricks. As a rule, the materilization of the ninth trick will depend on a finesse. Hence, there are about 8½ honour-tricks which for simplicity's sake we shall call 8. This gives us the simple basis for one of the most valuable rules in Bridge—the Rule of Eight.

The total of defensive honour-tricks that will be won at any bid (trump or no-trump) after each deal is about 8 out of the 13 tricks.

Aces will win 4 tricks, and the lower honours will win slightly less or more than 4 additional tricks. It does not matter how the honour values will combine, the final result will, as a rule, average around 8½ honour-tricks. Theoretically, it is possible to set up a hand that will show a count even of ten defensive honour-tricks. But it is sufficient for any one to deal out a few hands and count the total of honour-tricks made after the play to notice that its number always varies between 8 and 9.

Since the number of defensive honour-tricks is constant, the more honour-tricks there are in one hand, the less there remain for the others and vice versa. It is like four poker players starting a freeze-out game, each with an equal number of chips.

HOW TO DETERMINE THE BALANCE OF STRENGTH IN PARTNER'S AND OPPONENTS' HANDS AT ANY BID

In the opponents' hands the balance of honour strength is determined as follows:

Add the minimum of honour-tricks shown by *partner's* various bids to the honour-tricks held in one's own hand; the balance remaining, after subtracting from 8½, gives the maximum number of honour-tricks held by the opponents.

The balance of honour strength in partner's hand can be determined by adding to the player's own hand the defensive honour-tricks as shown by *opponents'* bids.

The balance-of-strength principle is of great practical value in checking the weakness and strength of the enemy's and partner's hands. Take the following situation:

North holds: ♠ Q 9 3
♥ K Q 8 4
♦ K 10 7
♣ Q J 6

West: Doubles

What has East?

South (dealer): bids 1 ♠

South, for his bid, has 2½ honour-tricks or more. West, for his take-out double (page 211) has three honour-tricks. North has 2½ honour-tricks. South, West, and North have among them *eight* honour-tricks; East cannot have more than ½ honour-trick, and probably not that.

In the following situation, West-East, by applying the Rule of Eight, smoke out South's psychic bid with the greatest of ease.

North: Passes

East holds:
♠ K J 7
♥ Q J 8
♦ K Q 9 6
♣ A J 10

West: Doubles

South (dealer): bids 1 NT

East passes for penalties, and South cannot have a good 'out'.

Many players have been astonished at the ease with which experts defend themselves against even the best-planned psychic bids. It seems that they calmly and unconcernedly wade through the psychic barrage as though the opponents were silent all the time. In fact, in many cases of awkward psychic bids the player is even helped. The answer to the question 'How do the experts distinguish a bona fide bid from a psychic one?' is found in the application of the Rule of Eight and its principle of the balance of strength.

WHEN TO EXPECT A BLANK IN PARTNER'S HAND

The Rule of Eight will help one to expect a blank in partner's hand and thus avoid a disastrous penalty.

North (dealer):
bids 1 ♠

West holds:
♠ A Q 7 4
♥ K 9 6 3
♦ A 8 5
♣ K 2

N
W E
S

East passes

South bids
2 NT

West takes no action, realizing that the North-South bidding indicates possession of five to six honour-tricks, and that East must therefore have a 'bust'.

THE RULE OF EIGHT IN SLAM BIDDING

The Rule of Eight is also of great assistance in slam bidding.

For instance, partner opens the bidding with two hearts and you hold ♠ Q 7 6 ♥ Q 8 6 3 ♦ K 9 5 2 ♣ K 4. You know the combined hands contain about 7½ honour-tricks and that the trump suit must be solid. At most there is one Ace out against the hand. A small slam must be certain.

AVERAGE GAME AND SLAM EXPECTANCIES

The winning of tricks with low cards largely depends upon honours, which serve as indispensable stoppers and re-entries. It becomes, therefore, possible to use the Rule of Eight not only to measure the balance of defensive honour

strength around the table, but to extend it for measuring quickly, and with fair accuracy, the chances for scoring one-odd, two-odd, game or slam, at trump *and* no-trump. Of the thirteen tricks in the play of any hand, about eight are won with defensive honour-tricks and five with lower cards. This gives us a convenient yardstick of all trick values based roughly on the ratio of 8-5.

The following table of average expectancies is based on the count of defensive honour-tricks in combined hands; it shows when to expect a part-score, a game or even a slam. It applies both to trump and no-trump bids, except that owing to ruffing possibilities the expectancy at trump bids is usually one trick more than at no-trump bids, even though the number of defensive honour-tricks is the same. It cannot replace the more accurate valuation of hands by counting the honour- and low-card winners but it will serve well in judging at a glance the approximate value of one's hand.

TABLE OF EXPECTANCIES

4 TO 5 *bare* HONOUR-TRICKS IN COMBINED HANDS.

ONE-ODD ZONE. Hands containing about four honour-tricks lie on the line of demarcation between making one-odd and going down one. At suit-bids, one-odd can usually be made, and sometimes two-odd.

5 TO 5½ HONOUR-TRICKS IN COMBINED HANDS.

TWO-ODD ZONE. With only five honour-tricks, more than one no-trump or two in a suit should usually not be bid unless the hands are well padded with plus values, or the suits 'fit'. When, however, there is in the partnership hands a solid or easily establishable five-card or longer suit, with sufficient stoppers and entries, and 5½ honour-tricks, the expectancy is three no-trump.

6 HONOUR-TRICKS IN COMBINED HANDS.

GAME ZONE. Six or more honour-tricks will, with rare exceptions, produce game in no-trump or in a suit. The exception is six bare honour-tricks with no long suits or intermediate values.

6½ – 8 HONOUR-TRICKS IN COMBINED HANDS.

SLAM ZONE. With 6½ or more honour-tricks begin to think about a slam; but remember that it is still remote without freak distribution or long suits (see Slam Bidding). With eight honour-tricks you are in the Grand Slam Zone.

The word 'bare' indicates a skinny type of a hand with few intermediates or face cards.

Illustrating the Table of Trick Expectancies

			Honour-tricks	
		♠ A 7 3	1	
		♥ 10 5 4 2		
		♦ Q J 9 6	½	
		♣ 10 7		
Honour-tricks				*Honour-tricks*
½	♠ Q J 6 2	N	♠ 10 5	
½	♥ K 8	W E	♥ A Q 6 3	1½
	♦ 10 5 4	S	♦ 8 3 2	
1	♣ A 9 3 2		♣ K Q 6 4	1
			Honour-tricks	
		♠ K 9 8 4	½	
		♥ J 9 7		
		♦ A K 7	2	
		♣ J 8 5		

It will be observed that East-West have a total of 4½ honour-tricks. They can make one no-trump, winning four club tricks and three heart tricks after North and South have already taken four diamond tricks and the two high spades. In clubs, however, East-West can make two-odd, losing only two spade tricks and three diamonds.

Increase the combined honour-trick holding of East-West to five honour-tricks by adding the ♦ King or ♦ Q J x to West's hand and two no-trump or three-odd in clubs can be made.

Again, strengthen the East-West hands by giving West the King of diamonds and the King of spades, making the combined holding six honour-tricks, and three no-trump or four clubs will be produced. The no-trump expectancy is therefore game.

Deduct ½ to 1 honour-trick from the combined total if holding 4-3-3-3 hand-pattern (especially for slam purposes) unless partner has shown a two-suiter.

Even with five honour-tricks a game at trump or no-trump is not necessarily excluded with unusually favourable suit lengths. And in rare cases a game will not be made even with six honour-tricks. For instance:

♠ A K Q ♥ A K 6 3 ♦ A K 7 4 ♣ Q 2	N W E S	♠ 9 6 2 ♥ 9 8 5 2 ♦ 8 6 3 ♣ 8 4 2

West is declarer at four hearts.

This hand is so hopelessly barren of distributional values that even the 6½ honour-tricks do not help much and yet a game should be bid, since if dummy had a Queen or could turn two low diamonds into clubs the game would be easy.

These average expectancies and zones are at best rough approximations and will lose all of their value if too blindly relied upon. The real value of the Rule of Eight is as a general guide, a compass indicating approximate location of strength around the table. The Rule of Eight has been a godsend to millions of average and advanced Bridge players and its accuracy has been so remarkable that even expert players lean strongly upon it. As for the Standard Table of Honour-tricks, it is, in my opinion, the indispensable measuring rod of all honour values in bidding, for masters and beginners alike. For it represents the train of subconscious reasoning of any expert.

CHAPTER IV

THE DISTRIBUTIONAL COUNT

The Distributional Count summarizes in a few simple tables and formulæ the entire process of bidding valuation. Many players will find it difficult and troublesome to visualize the later play of the cards and thus determine quickly the total of winners and losers in the hand. The Distributional Count expresses the same natural methods in a shorter mathematical way. Players will find that, in learning the Distributional Count, they are actually mastering the principles of play.

One of the features of the Distributional Count is that, except with very strong suits where it is easier to count the losers, the length values of suits are counted separately and the honour values of the suit are added.

Thus, if I bid with A Q 7 6 5, I simply count 2 winners for the five-card length to which I add 1½ for the A Q, giving a total value of 3½ winners, or between 3 and 4 winners depending on a finesse. The other way of valuing the suit is by placing the missing K J 10 in opponent's hands, assuming 3-3-2 distribution and deducting either one or two losers from the five-card length, depending on a finesse, which gives the same result, to wit, 3½ winners. It is obviosuly simpler with weakish suits to count the length values first and then add the honour-values.

In the Distributional Count all the length values are automatically fixed, but the value of the trump length is double that of the side-suit length for bids of one until partner has been heard from. When he denies the bid suit, its value is reduced to the value of any side length.

After a little practice it is desirable that the player should forget the Distributional Count and value the hands naturally. It will offer the best proof that the Count has served its purpose well.

VALUATION OF DECLARER'S HAND

In using the Distributional Count to estimate the number

of available winners at his own trump bid, the player counts his honour-winners and adds to them the length value of the trump and side suits.

The full value of honours: The trump suit is usually controlled by the declarer, who can draw out the opponents' trumps and remove the danger that the third round of a side suit will be ruffed. Therefore, A K Q, which is valued as only 2-plus honour-tricks against the opponents' trump bid because the Queen may be ruffed, becomes three full winners at declarers own bid. K Q J, valued as 1½ honour-tricks, is counted as two honour-winners because it will surely win two tricks.

The table of honour-winners on page 49 gives the values of the various combinations. Declarer counts his honour strength in accordance with these values and then adds the long cards of his trump suit and side suits of four cards or more.

How to value the trump suit: Until partner has denied the suit (by refusing to raise) every card over three in the trump suit is valued as one full winner. Thus, the trump suit 9 7 6 4 3 2 is worth three winners; change the suit to A 7 6 4 3 2 and the total value is four winners, three for length and one for the Ace.

If partner supports the suit, declarer continues to count each long trump as one full winner. If partner fails to raise, declarer revises his valuation, considering the long trumps to be worth no more than long cards in a side suit (see below).

Solid trump sequences, however, are more easily valued by simply counting out the losers. Q J 10 9 8 is valued as three sure tricks, whether partner supports or not.

Valuation of Declarer's Side Lengths:

Four-card, five-card and other *lengths* have a definite trick-taking value which must be added to the honour value of the suit and to the total winners of the hand. As with honours, the length winners are sure and probable, worth 1 and ½ a trick. As a rule, the side lengths are valued on the basis of the second most probable distribution.

LONG-SUIT TRICKS	*In Trump Suit*	*In a Side Suit*
A four-card length is worth	1 trick	½ trick
A five-card length is worth	2 tricks	1 trick
A six-card length is worth	3 tricks	2 tricks
A seven-card length is worth	4 tricks	4 tricks

Intermediate cards, the Jacks, tens and even nines, play an important role in the valuation of any suit. For instance, with ♥ K 5 3 2 as a side suit, I value the King as ½ trick and *the four-card length* as another ½ trick, giving me a total of one winner for the suit. If the suit were K 10 9 2 I would value it as almost 1½ winners, for the intermediates 10-9 are a mighty important factor.

It is important to remember that the establishable value of side suits depends entirely upon the strength and length of the trump suit. Unless the trump suit is strong and long enough to draw out the poisonous fangs of the opponents' trumps, the low cards of side lengths will be worthless. Their value appears when the opposing trumps disappear.

VALUATION WHEN RAISING PARTNER'S TRUMP BID

When raising partner's trump bids of one, the following must be taken into consideration:

1. Trump length and honours in partner's bid suit.
2. Winners, honour and length, in side suits.
3. *Ruffing tricks due to short suits* (a void, a singleton or a doubleton).

Trump valuation of the Raising Hand: With four or more cards in the dummy the trumps have an intrinsic 'promotional' value in addition to their ruffing value. They decrease the number of guards available to the opponents' honours, and make it easier for declarer to 'drop' these honours. Hence, the 'concealed' value of about ½ trick for a four-card trump length in the dummy.

Trump honours in the prospective dummy are also added tricks, since declarer usually assumes that they are held by the enemy. The J 10, the Queen and the King are valued somewhat differently than usual. The J 10 and the Queen are worth ½ trick each; the Q J and the King are worth practically the same as an Ace. The total value of any trump

suit will, therefore, be made up of its length tricks plus trump honours.

THE TRUMP LENGTH AND HONOURS ARE VALUED:

Trumps	*Tricks*
Three cards or less	0
Four cards	½
Five cards	1
Six cards	2
Add for Ace	1
Add for King or Q J	1
Add for Queen or J 10	½[1]

The Count of Honours and Low Cards in Side Suits: Honours and long suits are counted at their full value, just as in declarer's hand.

Valuation of Ruffers: The bidding valuation of ruffers attempts to reproduce as exactly as possible the actual play, presuming the best defensive play by the opponents. It reproduces the subconscious valuation of experts. Assume that the declarer has bid spades and the dummy has ♠ J 9 8 and a singleton small heart. Even if declarer holds three losers in hearts it is not probable that he will be able to ruff more than one losing heart, since the opponents, unless asleep at the switch, will lead trumps to prevent the second ruff. But, if the dummy holds four spades to the Jack and the same singleton heart, the declarer will usually be able to ruff at least two losing hearts even when the opponents put up the best defence.

THE RUFFING-TRICKS ARE VALUED:

	With 3 of Partner's Suit	*With 4 or More*
A doubleton (only two cards of a suit)	½ trick	1 trick
A singleton (only one card of a suit)	1 trick	2 tricks
A void (an absent suit)	2 tricks	3 tricks

When the hand contains two short suits, only one is counted—the shorter of the two.

[1] The Queen is one full winner when partner has *rebid* the suit.

Revaluation of the Declarer's Hand: When partner, instead of raising, makes a different bid, the declarer's hand becomes the responding hand in turn and must be *revalued* accordingly. If partner bids a new suit, the opening hand becomes the supporting hand in turn and may now include ruffing values in support of partner's suit.

Consider the following hand:

♠ Q J 6 5 ♥ K 6 5 ♦ A K J 5 ♣ 3 2

(*a*) Partner opens the bidding with one spade. The hand contains six winners in support of partner's spade suit:

	Honours	*Long Cards*	*Ruffers*
♠ Q J 6 5	1	½	
♥ K 6 5	½		
♦ A K J 5	2½	½	
♣ 3 2			1

(*b*) You open the bidding with one spade. Your hand contains 5-plus winners at your own spade bid.

	Honours	*Long Cards*
♠ Q J 6 5	½+	1
♥ K 6 5	½	
♦ A K J 5	2½	½
♣ 3 2		

(*c*) You open the bidding with one spade, and your partner takes you out into two hearts. Your hand now contains slightly less than five winners at spades, for your long card in spades cannot be valued as one full winner when partner has failed to support spades. However, you have 5½-plus winners in support of your partner's heart suit:

	Honours	*Long Cards*	*Ruffers*
♠ Q J 6 5	½+	½	
♥ K 6 5	1		
♦ A K J 5	2½	½	
♣ 3 2			½

QUANTITY BIDDING

It is necessary for my partner to know about the *total* number of winners in my hand. If I can somehow signal that my hand is worth, say, six winners with spades as

trump, all he will need to do is to count up the winners in his own hand at a spade bid and thus determine mathematically the total number of winners for the *combined* hands. If he has, say, four winners at spades, we control ten winners, and hence a game.

Bidding to show the total number of winners in a player's hand is *quantity* bidding. The mechanics of quantity bidding is based upon logical *assumptions* of the total of tricks expected in partner's hand. The starting point is the first bid.

There are thirteen tricks. Before my partner speaks, I can reasonably assume that his average share is about three winners.[1] In order to contract for seven tricks, which is one-odd, the opener must therefore have as *his* share at least four winners.[2]

Theoretically, therefore, the starting point of the first raise should be also four winners, since it carries the contract from seven to eight tricks, or two-odd. Still speaking theoretically, I will have two raises for five winners (5+4=9) and three raises for six winners (6+4=10).

This is, however, the purely mathematical background of bids, rebids and raises. It is valuable only in so far as it shows the underlying mechanics of quantity bidding, its framework so to speak. In actual practice, although quantity bidding is always present, there are very important modifications and limitations *imposed by the bidding strategy*.

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[1] This assumption applies only to opening suit-bids of one. In higher contracts, the assumption when partner has made no bid is at the most two tricks if vulnerable. (See Rule of Two and Three.)

[2] It is usually unnecessary to count winners for opening one-bids and responses; in fact, in the early stages of bidding a glance at the hand's honour-tricks and distribution usually suffices.

CHAPTER V

PARTNERSHIP LANGUAGE OF INFERENCES

The four suits that form the pattern of a player's hand are but the broken pieces of a puzzle; it is the partner who holds the missing pieces and the solution.

As a result of the imperious necessity to play two hands harmoniously as one, there arose in the old days of Whist a beautiful language of cards, by means of which partners could legitimately secure information from each other by drawing inferences from the *fall of cards*. Similarly, in partnership bidding there arises the necessity of a logical language of bids, also based upon legitimate inferences, to find out and show honour and distributional values. In skilful minds this language of bids becomes a finely spun network of direct and indirect inferences supporting a bridge thrown over the unknown of each deal.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE LANGUAGE OF BIDS

The structure of the language of bids is quite simple. In order to combine 26 cards for the best bid, partners must, as a rule, exchange three kinds of information—on the total *number* of tricks, on distribution of suits in the hands, and on the minimum number of honour or defensive tricks.

Inferences to show quality or the total of low-card and honour-tricks in the hand, are deduced by each partner from the number of *times* the bidding is raised to a higher level.

Inferences to show distribution (lengths of suits in the hand) are conveyed by almost any bid, side by side with quality and quantity inferences. The different trump lengths in declarer's hands, starting with four-card trump suits and on, will be shown by trump rebids and special bids such as opening bids of three or higher; the trump length and strength in the raising hand is shown or denied by raises or suit take-outs.

Inferences to show quality, or the total of honour-tricks in the hand, are drawn from differences in the *kind* of bid made, and from the bidding level. According to the kind of bid made,

an opening bid, a simple take-out, a forcing take-out, a defensive overcall, a take-out double and so forth, and to the bidding level (one-odd, two-odd, three-odd, etc.) partners can determine the honour-tricks held by their side. Quality bidding is necessary to show accurately the playing limits of opponents' bids.

These three streams of inferences are generally found in a single bid, with the emphasis laid now on quantity, now on quality or distribution. For instance, an opening bid of one spade, when logically decoded, tells partner in two words, 'One spade', an intricate story: 1. *Quantity*—I have at least four winners; 2. *Distribution*—I have a minimum length of four trumps; 3. *Quality*—among the four winners I have at least 2½ honour-tricks.

Next, the language of bids tells much more through the silent language of indirect inferences in Bridge, which are so called because their premise is not what partner actually bids, but what he fails to bid, and why. For example, I bid 'One spade' and you raise my bid to 'Two spades'. Because you did not raise it to three or four spades; because you did not make any number of other bids, I, by a process of elimination and negative inference, deduce that you hold something like this:

♠ J x x x ♥ x x ♦ Q J x x ♣ K x x

The Principle of Economy of Bids: Practically the entire structure of partnership language and strategy springs from the principle of Economy of Bids. It is astonishing how much information can be packed into a single bid. The two partners may hold any one of millions of possible hands and yet, with the logic of inferences as clues, they join, in most cases, the two unknown hands for the precise bid.

The player must carefully avoid wasting precious rounds and, by thinking ahead, must so arrange his bidding sequence as to give and obtain the maximum of information at the lowest possible level.

Unnecessary jump bids and superfluous overcrowding of bids will rapidly exhaust the player's available rounds, compelling him to land for the final bid under heavy cloud in the fog of wild guessing. Economy of bids, which the careful player always considers in solving each individual bidding

problem, is also one of the main objects of many of the strategical methods in the Culbertson System. It made necessary a number of strategical bids and devices to keep the bidding low (Approach bids and Minimum Responses); or to keep the bidding low and at the same time not run the risk of losing the game or slam through a premature pass by partner (Forcing Bids).

Even shut-out or pre-emptive bids result indirectly from the principle of Economy of Bids, since they force the enemy to start bidding at a very high level and thus lose valuable rounds or *time* for the exchange of information. Later in the book I analyse the Time Factor and show how behind each play or lead there stands the shadow of Time. Time stands also behind each bid. And the Economy of Bids really means the economy of Time.

For example, with this hand

♠ A Q J 8	N	♠ 10 7
♥ 6	W E	♥ A Q 9 5
♦ A Q 7 3	S	♦ 10 6 2
♣ J 9 8 2		♣ K Q 6 4

Typical wasteful, jumpy bidding might go as follows:

West	East
1 ♠	2 ♥
3 ♦	4 ♣
?	

and only with excellent luck will any game contract make. But orderly bidding would proceed to the logical contract as follows:

West	East
1 ♦	1 ♥
1 ♠	2 ♣
3 ♣	3 N T

THE APPROACH METHOD

The principle of Economy of Bids leads to one of the most important practical applications in the strategy of bidding—the Approach Method.

The Approach Method or rule can be formulated as follows:

When opening the bidding or when responding to partner, prefer any proper suit bid of ONE to any other bid, reserving the no-trump bid or the higher suit bids (jumps) for special bidding situations.

The word *proper* in the phrase 'proper suit bid of one' signifies a *biddable suit*, the requirements for which are given on pages 114, 115, 116.

The 'higher (jump) suit bids' are a small but important group of strategic bids of which some are *forcing* bids and others are *shut-outs*. A final important group of hands consists of opening no-trump bids.

Since about eighty per cent of bidding revolves around the Approach Method, its simple formula is the key to the entire scheme of bidding.

The tremendous range of Opening Suit-Bids of One: The first and most important consequence of the Approach Method is to be found in the scheme of bidding levels in the *Opening Hand.*

Of these the level of one-odd is by far the most important. The opening bids of two, three and four are the exceptions: the two-bid is reserved for a very small number of hands so powerful that game is assured, while a slam may be definitely in sight; the four-level serves the strategical need of shut-outs, an interesting case of desperate defence by a bold counter-attack; the three-bids are two-way bids, treacherously concealing either a powerful hand (weaker of course, than two-bids) or a shut-out bid. All these bids are the exceptions, whereas the opening suit-bids of one are the rule.

With suit-bids higher than one, or with opening no-trump bids of one, the bidding mounts up very rapidly and becomes overcrowded, so that much valuable partnership information is usually shut out. The ideal strategical bid in contract is a one-bid in a suit.

The following hands show the extreme range of opening suit bids of one. In the first hand the bid is one diamond; in the second, one spade; and in the third, one heart:

1. ♠ 5 3 2 ♥ 7 4 3 ♦ A K J 6 5 ♣ K 2
2. ♠ A K 10 8 7 6 ♥ A Q J 8 5 ♦ K 8 ♣ —
3. ♠ A 9 5 ♥ A Q 7 3 2 ♦ A K ♣ A 8 3

To soothe the nervous player who might fear that with

the powerful hands 2 and 3 he might lose a game if partner passes, I can assure him that no such thing would happen except once in a blue moon or with a moron as a partner. A Bridge hand, like an individual in a community, is very seldom strong enough to get along without help from the neighbours. These two hands will get nowhere unless partner has a modicum of strength in high cards or distribution, in which case he will respond to a suit-bid of one. Any bid higher than an opening bid of one, therefore, would be useless or would end in disaster if partner held a blank hand.

The tremendous range of opening one-bids in a suit logically determines the requirements for partner's responses. The limits of these responses are scientifically measured to fit partner's hand like a glove. Partner must keep the bidding open with as little as one honour-trick, distributed in two suits, by means of a *negative no-trump*; or by a suit take-out of one; or, by a courtesy raise, with as little as half an honour-trick, if he holds four trumps. In this way games are not missed should the opening bidder hold the maximum, which is about 5½ honour-tricks. No loss or but a slight loss results should the opener hold the minimum.

Putting Opening No-trump Bids into a Straitjacket: In most deals the opening hand offers a choice between some suit as trump, and no-trump. The Approach Method requires that *whenever a hand contains a biddable suit (be it only a four-card minor) the suit and not the no-trump should be chosen.*

The only important exception to this rule is a range of hands containing about four to five honour-tricks and 4-3-3-3 distribution, where the opening no-trump can do no harm. In fact, it becomes quite valuable as a *limit* bid from the standpoint of honour strength; and, what is even more important, for its extreme precision in delineating the hand pattern 4-3-3-3.[1]

Unless put into a straitjacket as prescribed by the approach strategy, the opening no-trump is a bull in a china shop. Any number of delicate inferences dealing with suit lengths and types of hand patterns are brutally eliminated;

[1] There are other exceptions of minor importance. (See Chapter VIII for the no-trump theory and practice.)

a large percentage of games on four-card suits, possible only because partner has four trumps which he could not show unless declarer bids the suit, are suppressed. If the opening no-trump is strong the enemy is discouraged from bidding and trapping himself; if the opening no-trump is weak partner is unduly encouraged and will often bid up into a heavy penalty, or the opponents will collect in another way by doubling.

CHAPTER VI

THE FORCING PRINCIPLE[1]

At the start of the bidding the partners are in the situation of two allied armies groping in total darkness. Partner's (and opponents') honour strength and distribution or suit lengths are unknown. Almost any opening bid is a leap in the dark. The responding hand, though better off after receiving the first message from his ally, will as a rule need much more information before completing the manœuvres for the final position or bid at which to give battle. Hence the strategy of cautious advances by both partners, the scouting approach bids pushed out ahead of the main body of hands as 'feelers' to reconnoitre for game possibilities or to fall back on defensive positions.

It will at times happen that a glance at the hand will suffice to see a game and even the prospects of a luscious slam. Such a hand bristles with Aces and Kings and usually contains two or three suits with *untold* possibilities—untold because success will usually depend upon the selections of the right bid out of several bids available.

In all cases, without exception, it is important not to spurt wildly toward the goal like an untrained horse smelling its stable, but to double your caution. Here the principles of Economy of Bids and Approaching are more important than ever. The reason is that the greatest loss to players does not come from their bad hands but from their good hands. At the bottom of many of these disasters I find nervous, almost panicky leaps straight to game or slam. I have seen jerky, impulsive gambles with a dangerous trump suit ending in

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[1] The Forcing principle and various Forcing bids were originated and developed by the author as a necessary and logical corollary of his Approach principle. They are now standard and form the basis of every system without exception. The Culbertson System of Bridge is also called and known as the Approach-Forcing System, although this is not correct since it does not include the Culbertson Systems of Plays and Leads.

disaster when a game or a slam would have been assured in some other suit, had not additional information been suppressed. And behind this I find the fear, often justified only too well, that *partner may drop the bidding before a game or a slam is reached.*

It is the purpose of the Forcing Principle scientifically to approach a game or a slam by the utmost economy of rounds and yet to banish the fear that partner will prematurely abandon the bidding.

Forcing Bids Defined: The Forcing Principle requires that after certain special suit-bids, called Forcing Bids, either partner must keep the bidding open *even without any, or added, values.*

Many years ago in Auction Bridge I held:

♠ — ♥ K Q J 10 ♦ A K 5 4 2 ♣ A K Q 10

We were on the rubber game and the opponent on my right, a sound player, bid originally four spades. My partner was a relative stranger but looked intelligent. I bid five spades. Partner bid six clubs, holding:

♠ 8 6 5 ♥ 9 7 4 ♦ 9 3 ♣ 9 7 6 3 2

We made six clubs with a little luck, and a large profit.

That was the birth-cry of the Forcing Principle, years before Contract Bridge.

THE FORCING BIDS

In the opening hand the opening two-bids are reserved exclusively for the game-forcing bids. In the responding hand *any jump bid, when such a jump is exactly one trick higher than needed to overcall the partner's last bid, is always and exclusively reserved for a game-forcing bid.*[1]

For instance:

	North	South
	1 ♥	2 ♠ (forcing)
but not	North	South
	1 ♥	3 ♠

It is evident that the lowest available berth that could be assigned to the game-forcing bids is a single jump.

[1] See also chapter 12, *Forcing Bids.*

OBJECT OF FORCING

There are three strategic objects of the Forcing principle:

1. To choose or offer to partner a choice *for game* between one or more suits and no-trump.

Partner has bid one heart; you bid three hearts with ♠ K J 6 ♥ Q 8 5 3 ♦ A 7 4 2 ♣ K 7.

2. To determine, without risking a pass or contracting too high, whether partner has or has not a certain key card or cards necessary for a small or grand slam.

You hold ♠ A K Q 5 3 ♥ A Q 6 4 ♦ 7 ♣ Q J 10. Partner has bid one heart; you bid *two* spades; but hearts will undoubtedly be the trump suit at the final bid.

3. To determine, without risking a pass and yet without risking a possibly dangerous game contract, whether partner has added values over his minimum previously shown (in which case the game will be contracted for); or has but a minimum (in which case the hand is passed below game).

Partner has bid one heart; you bid two clubs with ♠ K 7 5 ♥ Q 6 3 ♦ 8 4 ♣ A Q 6 5 2.

Accordingly, there are three distinct kinds of Forcing bids: the *game* force, the *slam* force, and the *one-round* force. In the *game* force, the bidding is kept open until some game is reached. In the *slam* force and intermediate force the bidding is kept open temporarily and for one round only.

When a Forcing Bid is made, the partner is under obligation to bid again. It is unconditional. 'Theirs not to reason why, Theirs but to do and die.' It does not matter if the player who is forced to bid has an absolutely blank hand, or nothing 'new' to show, or has made a psychic, or is convinced that his partner is a congenital idiot—the bidding must go on. People have been shot for less. This is the only meaning given to the word *forcing* in the Culbertson System. I do not deny that in certain rare cases a player may save a few hundred points by passing his partner's forcing bid, but this is a costly economy, for once partner's confidence is shaken and he has to take into his calculations even the remote possibility that partner may pass the forcing bid, the entire

sequence of his bidding will take another and more unnatural course.

Bridge is full of bidding situations which are '*practically*', '*almost*', or '*semi-*' forcing bids. But with Forcing Bids there are no 'ifs' and 'buts'. The pass ceases to exist.

CHAPTER VII

INFERENCES FROM PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

Bids the sole object of which is to convey or obtain information are exceptional. The few such bids or artificial conventions are used mainly in slam bidding (the 4-5 No-trump and Asking Bids), when it is indispensable to get specific answers about specific losers. Most partnership inferences have their source and meaning in the strategy of a *bidding situation*. The first object of a bid is to defeat the enemy, and these partnership inferences arise from the fact that the player is able to read the *strategical meaning* of a bid made. To understand the object, the reason for and the strategy of a bid or of a bidding situation is, therefore, to understand the partnership language.

THE OPENING, RESPONDING AND DEFENDING HANDS

The most natural distinction between the various bidding situations is according to whether the player has *opened* the bidding, *responded* to partner's opening bid or is *defending* against opponents' opening bid.[1]

The opening bid announces a hand which is above 'average' either in strength or in length and usually in both. It announces the type of hand that is equally ready for attack (at the partnership's own bids) or for defence against the opponents' bids. The opening bid contains about three honour-tricks, and often more, which usually precludes any game for the opponents and offers support for partner's bids.

The responding hand can lean rather heavily upon the better-than-average strength shown by his partner. With as little as one honour-trick or some semblance of shape in the hand he can venture into the open. 2½ honour-tricks look

[1] For the precise requirements and analysis of these important divisions see the respective chapters later in the book. Here I am merely attempting to give a bird's-eye view of the partnership language and the essential strategic methods that underlie it.

quite promising; and 3 honour-tricks) provided the hands fit) ought to bring the game down always, with a slam not far off—a trick or so in shapely hands.

The defending hand has already heard the bad news. His strategy is dominated by the fact that the opponents have initiated the attack, presumably showing a fairly strong hand. The demon of penalty is at the heels of every bid he may make. But, although hopes for slams and games in minor suits are at the wrong end of the binoculars, the chances of major-suit and no-trump games, especially the former, are by no means shut out. Not to count the tremendous advantage of cautiously bold interference bidding, a sort of judicious guerilla warfare.

The main point about these three bidding divisions is that in some cases the same strategical object will require a different kind of technique to interpret it.

If you hold

♠ — ♥ A Q J 10 ♦ K Q J 10 8 ♣ A K Q 7

you make a forcing two-bid if you are the opening hand; you achieve the same purpose if you are the responding hand after your partner opened the bidding by jumping to three diamonds; if you are the defending hand against the opponents' spade bid you will bid over the opponents' one spade, *two spades* which is also forcing. The object in all three cases is the same—to show a very powerful hand. The technique and the bidding level, however, are entirely different.

OBJECTS OF STRATEGY

There are many dozens of kinds of bids in a Bridge system to bewilder and perplex the Bridge player. They become very simple, however, if it is realized that this great variety of bids and methods (many of them new) are, as I have shown, derived from a few principal strategic situations.

All the strategic methods are divided into two broad families, according to their objects. The object of the first group is to enable the partners to select scientifically the best bid, by means of specially designed methods which are rooted in the logic of the bidding situations. Among such strategical methods we have the *approach*, *forcing*, *minimum* and various *slam* bids, as well as the no-trump bids.

The second family of strategic bids has for its goal the defeat of the enemy by penalizing them, bluffing them or taking a paying sacrifice. Among such strategic bids we have the penalty double, shut-outs, the psychic and semi-psychic, and the sacrifice bids. Dominating all strategic situations with partner or against opponents is the Pass, the most philosophical and the most eloquent of all bids. Many know how to bid, but few have learned the subtle and most difficult strategy of passing. The main function of a pass is to indicate a hand which is below the average biddable expectancy. But there are many ramifications to the pass, such as the trap pass, the waiting pass, the forcing pass and even the pass (not peace) of contentment.

THE ZONES OF BIDDING

It is indispensable that the player be able, after hearing from partner, to indicate *his* desire as to whether the bidding should be dropped or continued to game or slam. In the chaotic traffic of the thousands of hands dealt it will be necessary to flash the red stop-light (minimum bids), or green go-light (game-forcing bids), or orange attention-light (intermediate bids), while the blinkers (pass) siren the death warning. Accordingly, the bidding territory consists of four inferential *Zones of Bidding*, and each zone is serviced by *its own system of strategical bids.*

THE FOUR ZONES OF BIDDING

All bids (and hands) belong to one of the four following *zones of bidding:* the *game*, the *slam*, the *minimum*, and the *intermediate* zones. In this manner either player can signal at once to his partner that *his* strength is such that a no-game (part-score), game (strong hand), or a slam (very strong hand) should be expected. So that the duet is sung by the player and his partner 'pianissimo', 'forte', or 'fortissimo'.

Game Zone bidding: The special kind of bids that flash the green game signal driving the hands toward game are the forcing bids derived from the Forcing Principle. Naturally, the game is not guaranteed by the Treasury and a very bad break may belie the announcement of the player who has made a force.

The Slam Zone: The game-forcing bids generally indicate a hand of great strength (at least six honour-tricks for combined hands) and in most cases a slam is not far away. Slam bids require such refinement in precision that game forces alone are decidedly inadequate. They cannot locate specifically the presence or absence of a few key cards—Aces, Kings, singletons and even Queens, in partner's hand, which make or break a slam; nor can they ward off the horrors of duplicating values when the wrong Ace is present and the right Ace is missing. To enable the player to find himself more often than heretofore on the right side of a slam swing, a finer network of inferences was developed around two special slam conventions—the Four-Five No-trump and the Asking Bids.

The Minimum Zone: A special family of strategic bids called *minimum bids* serves to flash to partner the red, or minimum signal. It would not be quite correct to call any minimum bid a stop signal, for partner is at liberty to go as far as he likes provided he has justifiable rebid values. In the Culbertson System there is no such bid as a stop bid, except possibly a loud or trembling pass. It is one of the greatest failings of our system that no effective means has been devised as yet to muzzle and gag one's partner. Forcing bids drive him willy-nilly toward the game or slam goal; but there is a fortune awaiting the theorist who can devise an effective stop-bid. Minimum bids are, rather, designed to warn partner as soon as possible that the bidder's hand is definitely limited; or, should he be forced to respond again, his *minimum response* denies added values. Among such bids are the single raise, negative no-trump after opening one-, two- or higher bids, sign-offs, and normal (non-jump) suit take-outs by either partner. Sometimes even a *six-bid* is a 'minimum response' (see Grand Slam Force).

The Intermediate (possible game) Zone: The intermediate zone is the largest, the most complicated and, except for the slam zone, the most difficult. It is so called because the player, either as original bidder or after partner's first bid, does not see a certain game in his own or combined hands, and must therefore proceed in such manner as to obtain

from partner (or opponents) additional information. The intermediate zone includes all the initial bids and most of the middle range except the game forces, but including a special group of strategic bids, called *one-round forces*.

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE BIDDING LEVELS AND STRATEGIC BIDS

It is not enough to know the underlying strategical principles and the bids derived from them. The next step is to know by what bidding device a bid that tells one thing about the hand is distinguished from a bid that means quite another thing. The answer is, by associating a bid with a definite *bidding level*.

There are seven levels or rounds of bidding, starting from one-odd and ending with seven-odd. In addition there are three basic positions—the Opening, Responding and Defending hands. Theoretically, therefore, there are twenty-one bidding situations, and to each situation it is possible to attach a bid containing a special meaning as to the strength of the hand or the bidding zone to which it belongs. In addition to these twenty-one 'cells' wherein an egg of Bridge wisdom could be deposited, some players pervert minor suits from their natural state to behave in a special manner. also, the same bidding level may be used to indicate a bid with a *double and even triple meaning*, like some English sounds —'two, too, and to', or 'pair, pare and pear'.

Fortunately, in Bridge there are only two important situations where three different strategical bids live within the same bidding level like the rattlesnake, the prairie dog and the burrowing owl in Arizona. This occurs in suit-bids of one and two by the responding hand—one-round forces which may show a strong hand, the beginning of a sign-off, or a simple take-out.

The opening suit-bid and suit take-out of one (approach bids) occupy the one-odd level. Forcing bids occupy the level of two-odd in the opening hand, and in the responding hand the levels of two or three (depending on whether a lower- or higher-ranking suit is jumped).

The minimum responses occupy the 'berths' left vacant by the forcing bids in the one and two level—the one-odd for

one no-trump, and the two-odd level for an incipient sign-off. The defending hand had to forge two new tools—the take-out double and the single jump overcall—to meet the problem of displaying strong hands at the level of one- or two-odd; while the problem of forcing partner with a powerful game or slam hand in the defending hand was solved by a type of forcing bid common to all situations: the immediate overcall of the suit-bid by opponents. The level of three-odd for the opening hand is occupied by a bid which is used to show a powerful trump suit, with little emphasis, as in the two-bid, on the bidder's honour-tricks. Other three-bids and most four-bids are shut-out bids.

THE LIMIT BID PRINCIPLE

We have seen that, by assigning a specific bidding level to a special kind of bid, partner (and, alas, the opponents) can identify the particular type of his partner's unseen hand. He will know the number of total winners, the number of defensive honour-tricks, the length of most of his suits, and even the chance of scoring game, slam, part-score or the danger of being heavily penalized. All this is made possible by another basic principle of Bridge—the Principle of Limit Bids.

Practically every bid carries with it the information that that particular hand has a certain *minimum* of honour strength and suit lengths. These *minimum requirements* as to honour-strength or length of suits will vary greatly according to the particular kind of bid as recognized by its particular bidding level and position. You can jump your partner's opening three no-trump bid directly to six no-trump if you hold Q J 4 3 2 and an outside honour-trick; but you cannot raise your partner's opening four-spade bid to six spades even with four honour-tricks. It all depends on the agreed *minimums* which are attached to every bid.

The Principle of Maximum Limits: It is also possible to limit the *maximum* of the hand and thus render the bidding more precise and at the same time more simple. These minimum-maximum limits of each bid form a logical series of inferences.

For instance:

South	North
1 ♥	2 ♦
	or
	3 ♦

Both of North's bids are forcing, but the two-diamond response is one-round forcing; the three-diamond response is the big game-force. The usual minimum for a two-diamond response is about two honour-tricks and the maximum 3½ honour-tricks; the minimum for the three diamond response is also 3½ honour-tricks, the same as the maximum of the two diamond response; but the maximum of the game-forcing bid is not limited.

This new principle of limiting the maximum requirements as well as the minimum has a profound influence on the later development of the bidding. The reason is that the bid is not only limited from the standpoint of honour strength, and sometimes suit lengths, but whenever possible the bid is restricted to one or two specific types of hand-patterns. Thus no-trump responses, negative or strong, practically always evoke a pattern of 4-3-3-3 or 4-4-3-2 in partner's mind; the suit response, especially when persistent, evokes the image of an unbalanced pattern, with trump length and a singleton lurking somewhere. This aids enormously in suit placing.

THE BRIDGE PLAYER'S SCALES AND NOTES

It is only fitting that the most important bid of all—the penalty bid—has no specially assigned bidding level. It operates at every level, balancing the weight of all the other bids put together.

The inclusion of the penalty double completes the description of the beautifully logical instrument of bidding on which the player plays. Its scales are made up from various bidding levels. Its 'octaves' are the bidding zones. Its notes are the bids which produce a different pitch of inferences as they strike this or that bidding level. Finally, the intensity of its tones and overtones is regulated by the levers of a few basic strategical conceptions—the Approach Principle, the Forcing Principle, minimum and shut-out bids, and the penalty double.

Illustrating the Zones of Bidding

MINIMUM ZONE

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 N T	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 N T			
1 N T	Pass	2 ♦	
1 N T	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 N T	Pass	3 ♦	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	3 ♥	
1 ♥	1 ♠ or 2 ♦		
1 ♥	3 ♠		
2 ♥	Pass	2 N T	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
2 N T			
4 ♥			

Bids in the Minimum Zone may say: 'Partner, my hand and information I already have on your hand *indicate* there is no game.' These bids are:

1. One no-trump responses.
2. Single raises of one-bids.

Or they say: 'The strength of my hand is strictly limited to what I have already told you, and *no more*.' These bids are:

1. Rebids of one no-trump.
2. Non-jump suit take-outs of opening no-trump bids.
3. Forced no-trump responses.
4. Minimum defensive bids.
5. Pre-emptive bids.
6. Sign-off and preference bids.

Also, most important of all, *The Pass*.

INTERMEDIATE ZONE

South	West	North	East
1 ♥			
1 N T			
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠ or 2 ♦	
3 ♥			
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦			
1 ♥	Double		
1 ♥	1 ♠	Pass	Pass
Double			
1 ♥	2 ♠		

Bids in the Intermediate Zone show that the hand is surely of better than average strength, and *may* have added values. They are:

1. Opening suit and no-trump bids of one.
2. Non-jump suit take-outs of partner's opening suit-bid of one. (These are forcing for one round, and added values, if any are held, may be shown at the next opportunity to bid.)
3. Opening three-bids which show great trump strength, but limited honour strength.
4. Strength-showing overcalls and take-out doubles.
5. Free (non-jump) rebids in a suit or in no-trump.

Also bids which are nearly forcing, such as

1 ♥	Pass	1 N T	Pass
3 ♥			

And other such bids shown on page 146.

Also in this Zone are certain bids which may be dropped short of game only if partner has *less strength* than the bidder has a right to assume.

GAME ZONE

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	
1 ♥	Pass	2 N T	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
3 N T			
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
4 ♥			
1 ♥	Pass	1 N T	Pass
3 N T			
1 ♥	Double	Pass	2 ♠
1 ♥	Double	Pass	2 ♦
Pass	3 ♠		
1 N T	Pass	3 N T	

In the Game Zone are bids which assure partner that game should be bid on the strength of the bidder's own hand and the information he has already received.

1. Double raises and two no-trump take-outs of one bids.

2. All bids or raises that carry the partnership to a game contract, except opening pre-emptive bids, which are game bids but on which the bidder may expect to accept a penalty.

Some bids in the Game Zone may be in either the Game or the Slam Zone.

SLAM ZONE

South	West	North	East
2 ♠			
2 ♠	Pass	3 ♦	
1 ♣	Pass	2 ♦	
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♦	
1 ♥	2 ♥		
4 ♥	4 N T		
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♣ ? (Asking Bid)			
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	4 N T	

See also Chapters XXV, XXVI, XXVII

In the Slam Zone are forcing bids whose strength is unlimited, and which are indirect slam inferences:

1. Forcing two-bids in a suit.
2. Jump forcing take-outs.
3. An immediate overcall in the opponents' suit by a defender.

Also in the Slam Zone are:

1. Bids in opponents' suit.
2. 4-5 no-trump bids.
3. Opening bids of three, four, five or six no-trump.
4. Opening bids of five in a major suit or six in any suit.

Also *positive* or strength-showing responses to slam tries or to game-forcing bids.

Bids in the Slam Zone suggest a slam, but except in rare cases leave partner the option of signing off at game.

CHAPTER VIII

OPENING NO-TRUMP BIDS[1]

No-trump and trump bids, although closely interwoven, are so different that they may be considered as two different games. Accordingly, the requirements, responses and strategy of no-trump are its own. And even valuation, though based on the standard defensive table as with suit bids, must be considerably modified.

The main advantages of no-trump are: one trick less for game, freedom from the plague of bad trump breaks, and better promotion of ten-aces and intermediate values such as tens, Jacks or Queens.

The disadvantages of no-trump are: suppression of a great number of better fitting game and slam trump bids owing to the loss of bidding time and to the vagueness of the commonly used type of no-trump; the inherent uncertainty of no-trumps, placing them often at the mercy of a finesse or an undisclosed suit; the absence of a number of trick-saving plays available in the more flexible trump bids. The worst feature of the no-trump as it has been used heretofore has been its vapid nebulosity. If the opening no-trump is known to be strong it acts as a naïve warning to the opponents not to commit suicide by overcalling. If the opening no-trump is known to be weak, penalties accrue to the opponents from the devastating effects of the penalty pass (page 258). In either case, partner never knows whether he is coming or going.

There exists, however, a group of very important hands in which the opening no-trump retains all of its advantages and eliminates most of the faults. When used under proper

[1] The opening no-trump bids are a new and revolutionary departure from the usual ineffective type of no-trump bidding. The Culbertson No-trump Bids are an important factor in the new treatment of swing hands. Only opening no-trump bids are discussed in this chapter; no-trump responses and rebids after suit-bids of one are covered in other parts of the book.

conditions the opening no-trump becomes, paradoxically enough, the most precise of all the bids in Bridge.

THE OPENING ONE NO-TRUMP BID

Open with one no-trump, vulnerable or not vulnerable, if holding: *A minimum of four and a maximum of five honour-(defensive) tricks in at least three suits, provided the distribution of the hand is 4-3-3-3.*

The following two hands show, respectively, the minimum and the maximum one no-trump:

♠ K Q 8 ♥ A 7 4 ♦ A Q 5 2 ♣ K 6 3
♠ A Q 7 ♥ A Q 5 ♦ A 7 6 3 ♣ K Q 2

SOME ADJUSTMENTS OF THE NO-TRUMP REQUIREMENTS

The requirements of four to five honour-tricks and the 4-3-3-3 hand-pattern are definitely standard, and should not be materially deviated from. They paint such a precise picture of the hand to partner that he will not fail to take immediate and in many cases drastic action in his responses. The following slight adjustments of the usual requirements to the *shape* of individual hands do not in any way interfere with this picture.

1. *The Influence of Honour-Cards:* The value of intermediate cards (fillers) such as nines, tens and Jacks is greater at no-trump bids than at trump bids, because these cards may control the third or fourth round and win tricks, whereas at trump bids they would be ruffed. The term 'one honour-trick' is also subject to the following consideration:

An Ace, which is valued at one honour-trick, can never win more than one trick, while a K Q 10 combination, which is also valued as one honour-trick, will almost always win two tricks. An A 10 x becomes a double stopper if partner has the Jack, whereas an A x x is seldom improved by partner's holding the Jack.

If a hand contains eight or more *honour-cards* (ten-spot or higher), the four honour-trick minimum for one no-trump may be reduced to 3½ honour tricks in three suits.

For example:

♠ K Q 10 ♥ A 10 7 ♦ A 10 9 4 ♣ K 6 3

2. *The Question of Biddable Suits:* Whether the four-card suit of the hand is a biddable major or minor, the no-trump and not the suit should be preferred. The possible exception is a four-card major with 100 honours.

Bid one no-trump with

♠ A K J 9 ♥ Q J 4 ♦ Q J 3 ♣ A 7 5

This is one of the few cases in our system where an opening suit-bid of one is disdained in favour of no-trump. The spade suit will be shown by the opener on his first rebid: if his partner raises him to two no-trump, he will then bid three spades. It is true that a game in spades can be lost in the rather remote case when partner has no five-card suit but holds four spades with outside strength, and bids three no-trump. The advantage of showing of a precise 4-3-3-3 pattern, however, greatly outweighs the disadvantage of losing such a remote game.

3. *Exceptions as to Distributions:* One no-trump may be bid on a hand distributed 4-4-3-2, provided (1) the two four-card lengths are minor suits, and (2) the doubleton is at least K 2.

For example:

♠ K 4 ♥ A Q J ♦ A 7 5 2 ♣ A J 4 3

The danger of losing game in a minor suit by suppressing information on the two four-card lengths is very remote. It is true that the partner of the no-trump bidder, who assumes a 4-3-3-3 hand pattern, is slightly misled. Should he hold a five-card suit, he expects at least three cards of his suit and now he finds but two. Since he finds a strong doubleton, there is compensation. Holding 4-4-3-2 distribution, however, of which *one* of the four-card suits is a major, biddable or unbiddable, the player should not open with one no-trump. The danger of losing game in that major by shutting out a four-card suit bid in either hand is too great. There is a vast difference between the seemingly similar patterns 4-3-3-3 and 4-4-3-2. The latter has a doubleton—therefore, a possible ruffer. Furthermore, the hand contains a second four-card length in which might be established under the

protection of the trump suit a long card which possibly could not be established at no-trump. Here are two possible trick-winning values which vanish with the slight change to 4-3-3-3.

4. *Opening No-trumps on Other Distributions:* Occasionally and for psychological reasons of 'changing pace' one no-trump should be bid on hands distributed 5-3-3-2, or even 6-3-2-2, when the long suit is a minor which can be reasonably expected to lose not more than one trick (for example, A K Q 5 2 or A Q J 9 8 3). Any doubleton must be K 2 or better.

♠ Q J 4 ♥ K 10 3 ♦ A K Q 5 2 ♣ K 6

or

♠ Q J 4 ♥ K 7 ♦ A Q J 9 8 3 ♣ A 10

RESPONSES TO AN OPENING ONE NO-TRUMP

(VULNERABLE OR NON-VULNERABLE, OPPONENTS NOT BIDDING)

The responding hand can draw the following inferences from partner's opening one no-trump:[1]

1. Partner has at least four honour-tricks and may have up to five.

2. Partner has *three cards* in each of three suits, and four cards in the fourth.

The opening hand, in addition to the minimum four honour-tricks, holds a four-card length, offering a strong possibility (because the hand is fairly strong) to develop into a sure winner. Therefore, the responding hand assumes *five winners* from partner's hand.

By adding the five winners shown by partner's one no-trump to the winners of his own hand, the responding hand can always determine, within about one trick, the part-score, game or slam possibilities of the combined hands.

If the responding hand holds a five-card length, he knows that partner has at least three cards of his suit, making eight in all. Since the chances are 68 per cent in favour of a 3-2

[1] The fact that partner may occasionally hold other than the 4-3-3-3 distribution, or that he may have 3½ honour-tricks instead of four is ignored for all practical purposes, since the various hands contain equivalent values.

break of the outstanding five cards, the responding hand may assume that, in most cases, the five-card length will produce two winners.

Another factor must be kept in mind: the value of Kings, Queens and even Jacks is greatly increased when it is known that partner holds a strong hand distributed in three or four suits. These 'plus' and intermediate values mount very rapidly in proportion to partner's increased strength. For instance, Q 2 is a plus value at trump bids, but if partner holds four honour-tricks or more at no-trump, it is as good as a King; and, should it be known that partner must hold the A K of that suit, *the Queen is now equal to an Ace.*

The player should carefully study the table of relative values on page 49.

The responder can also gauge roughly the no-game or game expectation on the basis of the Rule of Eight. As a general rule, he will expect game with two honour-tricks or more (making a combined total of six), keeping in mind however that with the distribution 4-3-3-3 in the opener's hand, honour-tricks alone will not serve, and the responder must have some added length possibilities.

THE EFFECT OF DISTRIBUTION

The choice of responses to an opening one no-trump bid will often depend upon the responder's distribution.

When his hand is balanced (containing no singleton) there will be many cases in which the combined hands will produce nine winners (game at no-trump) and yet have but a doubtful play for game in a major suit. When the responder's hand contains a singleton the play for ten tricks at a trump bid is enough better to balance the advantage of the cheaper no-trump game, because an extra four-card length is available with the added protection of trumps.

To illustrate: the opening bid was one no-trump and the responder holds:

♠ A Q 5 4 2 ♥ 6 ♦ K 10 6 4 ♣ 6 4 2

He counts two long cards in spades, and adds two for the spade A-Q and two for the diamond suit: total six. Counting his partner for four honour-tricks, he sees a combined total of ten,

enough to make four spades. Having an unbalanced pattern, he will arrange his responses so as to arrive at a four-spade contract.

Holding ♠ A Q 5 4 2 ♥ 6 3 ♦ K 10 6 5 ♣ 8 7 he again counts six winners, but fears the quick loss of four tricks. He will raise the no-trump bid with a view to arriving finally at three no-trump.

In each case he will reach the most likely game if the opening hand is on the order of:

♠ K J 3 ♥ Q J 9 4 ♦ A Q J ♣ K J 10

THE SECOND LONG SUIT

A hand distributed 5-4-3-1 will not only produce long cards in its five-card suit but, since it is known that partner has at least three cards in every suit, an additional winner with the end card of its four-card length. At no-trump, this end card often cannot be established, because there is no time. At trump contracts, the trump cards act as super-stoppers and give declarer time to establish his second long suit if it breaks. When the second suit cannot be established it may still be possible to ruff the last card in the dummy, thus creating a ruffer, which is non-existent at no-trump.

When both hands contain a balanced distribution, and one of them is 4-3-3-3, *there is usually no extra trick available for trump bids*. This is one of the basic principles in the author's theory of distribution. It is the exact reverse and complement of the approach principle.

Boiled down, it comes to this:

With unbalanced distribution and a major suit, prefer the major-suit game to a no-trump game.

With unbalanced distribution and a minor suit, raise the no-trump unless strong enough to play for eleven tricks.

Even with unbalanced distribution and a major suit, a game contract at no-trump should be preferred when the combined hands seem to offer no more than nine winners.

THE PASS

(*a*) With only 1-plus honour-trick or less and with no five-card suit, the responder should pass his partner's opening bid of one no-trump.

Even the maximum opening one no-trump bid, with its

five honour-tricks and its possible added trick to be developed from its four-card suit, produces only six winners in all. The responding hand, with about one honour-trick and a four-card suit, cannot add more than two winners to the total, leaving the partnership still at least one trick short of game.

(*b*) With only ½ honour-trick and a five-card suit headed by less than a King or Queen, the responder should pass the opening one no-trump bid.

Pass, when holding:

♠ A 6 3	♠ Q 10 8 5 3	♠ 9 7 6 4 3
♥ 8 5 4 2	♥ 6 5	♥ K J 6
♦ Q 8 5	♦ 8 6 4	♦ 8 6
♣ 9 4 2	♣ 9 4 2	♣ 9 4 2

THE SINGLE RAISE

Hands on which a single raise may be given to partner's one no-trump bid range in strength from 1-plus up to and including two honour-tricks, and may include suit lengths of five, six or even seven cards.

The requirements for raising an opening one no-trump to two no-trump are as follows:

(*a*) 1½ honour-tricks in at least two suits.

The importance of having strength in at least two suits is even greater when the responder has no five-card or longer suit and very few or no fillers.

♠ K 7 5 ♥ K 5 4 2 ♦ K 6 ♣ 8 4 3 2

With an A Q or K Q J combination in a single suit, although the hand contains 1½ honour-tricks, a pass is preferable.

For example, partner's opening one-no-trump bid would be passed holding:

♠ 6 5 ♥ A Q 7 ♦ 9 7 6 3 ♣ 8 5 4 2

However, the presence of a plus value or a five-card length in another suit, or a four-card length in the suit containing the 1½ honour-tricks, brings the hand up to the standard required for a raise:

♠ 6 5 ♥ A Q 7 ♦ J 10 4 3 ♣ 8 5 4 2 Raise.

or

♠ 6 5 ♥ A Q 7 ♦ 9 7 6 4 3 ♣ 8 5 4 Raise.

or

♠ 6 5 ♥ K Q J 7 ♦ 9 7 6 4 ♣ 8 5 4 Raise.

(*b*) 1-plus honour-trick when the strength is divided among three suits and the hand as a whole contains four or more honour-cards.

The following hand, which contains less than 1½ honour-tricks, is an excellent raise to two no-trump:

♠ K 10 3 ♥ J 8 5 4 ♦ J 6 ♣ Q 10 7 2

Some hands which count to only one honour-trick justify a raise, notably the following:

♠ Q 7 5 ♥ Q 9 6 4 ♦ Q 4 3 ♣ Q 9 4

Change one of the suits to J 10 4, and the actual total falls below one honour-trick, yet due to the increased value of the honours opposite a strong hand (page 49), the raise should be given.

(*c*) 1-plus honour-trick in two suits, provided the hand contains a five-card suit headed by the Queen or any higher card.

♠ Q 6 5 3 2 ♥ 9 6 ♦ K Q 8 ♣ 7 4 3

It is very important that the strength of the hand not be limited to one suit, lest that one suit should run into a bad break and declarer be left without any resources whatsoever. But with as many as 1½ honour-tricks in the hand, there is enough strength whether they are in one suit or two.

♠ 7 6 ♥ 9 5 2 ♦ A J 6 4 3 ♣ 9 7 4 Bid two diamonds.

♠ 7 6 ♥ 9 5 2 ♦ A Q 6 5 4 ♣ 9 7 4 Bid two no-trump.

(*d*) One honour-trick in the hand, with any six-card suit, justifies a raise, if the honour-trick is in at least two suits and the six-card suit is headed by the Queen or a higher card.

The following hand is a poor take-out of two spades but an excellent raise from one no-trump to two:

♠ K 6 5 4 3 2 ♥ 6 3 ♦ 9 4 ♣ K 10 9

If the six-card suit is headed by the Ace, the raise should

be given with even so little as a Jack outside, the Ace assuring an entry to the six-card suit.

♠ A 7 6 5 3 2 ♥ J 5 4 ♦ 4 3 ♣ 8 7 Bid two no-trump.

THE RAISE FROM ONE NO-TRUMP TO THREE NO-TRUMP

The double raise of partner's opening one no-trump bid follows the same principles as the single raise, requiring in each case about one additional honour-trick. Summarized, the requirements for a raise to three no-trump are:

(*a*) 2½ *honour-tricks.*

For example, jump to three no-trump with

♠ Q 7 6	♠ 8 5	♠ A K 7	♠ A Q 6
♥ K 9 5 4	♥ A K 6 2	♥ K 6 5	♥ 7 6 5
♦ A J 6 3	♦ Q J 5	♦ 8 6 4 2	♦ A 4 3 2
♣ Q 7	♣ 10 9 4 3	♣ 9 5 2	♣ 8 6 4

(*b*) *Two honour-tricks in three suits*, if the hand contains four or more honour-cards; this does not include two bare honour-tricks, even with one or two tens outside.

♠ Q J 6 ♥ K 9 7 4 ♦ K Q 8 5 ♣ 8 2 Raise to three.
♠ A K 5 ♥ 10 8 4 3 ♦ 10 6 2 ♣ 10 8 7 Raise once.

(*c*) *Two honour-tricks* when the hand contains a five-card suit headed by the Queen or any higher card.

♠ A Q 7 4 3 ♥ K 3 2 ♦ 6 5 ♣ 8 7 4

(*d*) 1½ *honour-tricks* if the hand contains a six-card suit headed by a Queen or better, provided at least ½ honour-trick is held outside the long suit.

♠ K Q 8 7 4 3 ♥ K 7 5 ♦ 4 3 ♣ 8 2

With all these examples, there is no sense in even mentioning the five- or six-card major suit.

When a hand justifies a raise, it should be given whether the suit is a major or a minor. At this point, the reader will probably explode. During all his life to him and to millions of others including all experts, the five-card major suit headed by the A K or A Q was sacred. And now he is asked to reverse his life long habit, and by the very man whose 'attacks' on the no-trump bid are notorious.

This is one of the most attractive features in our theory of distributional no-trumps, for experience tells us that thousands of hands are butchered where apparently no one is to blame, but where the real reason is failure to follow this principle of insufficient distributional values. Hence, the apparently insane jumps to three no-trump with a perfectly solid major suit.

SUIT TAKE-OUTS

The simple suit take-out announces grave doubts of game, unless partner has a strong rebid. The forcing suit take-out (jump from one to three) announces a sure game and, in many cases, possibility of a slam. The direct jump to four in a suit is a limit bid announcing that though game is probable, the hand is below forcing strength in honours.

Single Suit Take-outs: Any suit take-out of one no-trump, such as two hearts or two diamonds, is, except the pass, the weakest response.

Bid two in any five-card suit with ½ to 1 honour-trick.

For example, with ♠ A 9 7 6 4 ♥ 6 5 3 ♦ 7 2 ♣ 8 5 2 it follows that if, after you bid two spades, the opener bids two no-trump, he now asks you to bid three no-trump if you have one honour-trick. He knows that your maximum strength would be about one honour-trick. There was no sense for him to continue the bidding with at least three trumps of your suit unless he saw game.

SIGN-OFF

There exist a number of hands which have no honour-strength whatever, or a plus at the most, but which contain a six-card suit. At no-trump, the suit is practically worthless. At a trump bid, it will produce three or four winners. When that suit is bid the first time, partner naturally does not know that the hand is blank and may rebid his no-trump. The responder would now be in a worse situation than before if it were not for a special convention provided just for this type of hand.

The special convention brought in at this point is called the 'The Sign-Off Bid'. *The sign-off is restricted to six-card or longer suits and to bidding situations where the responding hand,*

having made a suit bid at the level of two, rebids the same suit at the level of three.

For example, the following is a sign-off:[1]

Opener	Responder
1 N T	2 ♠
2 N T	3 ♠ (sign-off)

After partner's one no-trump, the responder, if holding any six-card suit, must bid two in that suit. If partner rebids his no-trump, the responder now signs off with a bid of three in the same suit. I said *worthless* hand, because, if the opener rebids, and the responder holds a six-card suit headed by ½ honour-trick, there should be a game.

Thus, bid two spades over partner's one no-trump, with

♠ Q J 7 6 3 2 ♥ 4 ♦ 5 3 ♣ 10 9 6 4,

and if partner rebids two no-trump, bid four spades.

FISHING FOR A REBID

In some cases, the player has no biddable suit, and yet his strength is so delicately balanced that he is placed before two evils: he is not quite strong enough to bid two no-trump, and yet is too strong to pass one no-trump. In such situations the way out is to bid two in an unbiddable four-card minor suit or, in a pinch, in a major.

For example, bid two clubs over partner's one no-trump with

♠ J 8 4 ♥ 10 9 7 ♦ K 10 3 ♣ Q 10 9 4

FORCING SUIT TAKE-OUTS

The forcing take-out consists of a jump bid in any suit, exactly one trick higher than is necessary to overcall the no-trump. Like all jump forcing take-outs, it unconditionally forces both partners to continue the bidding until a game is reached.

For instance:

Opener	Responder
1 N T	3 ♦ or 3 ♠

The opener must not pass, even if he has made a minimum no-trump bid.

[1] Refer to similar situation on page 194.

A forcing take-out of a no-trump bid does not require nearly so much strength as a forcing take-out of an opening suit bid. The opening no-trump bidder shows at least four honour-tricks, and if the responder has two honour-tricks or more with a fair five-card or longer major suit he knows that the combined hands contain six or more honour-tricks, that a good fitting trump suit is available, and that in accordance with the schedule given on page 82 the hands are in the game zone.

The total of six honour-tricks is not so likely to produce game if the playable major trump suit is not accompanied by an establishable side suit. Therefore the requirements in honour strength for forcing bids are half a trick higher if the distribution is balanced (5-3-3-2 or 6-3-2-2) than if the distribution is *unbalanced.*

With *unbalanced* distribution you will require:

Two honour-tricks with any five-card biddable suit.

A shade better than 1½ honour-tricks with any six-card major suit or a 5-5-2-1 two-suiter.

For example, with ♠ K 10 6 5 3 2 ♥ 4 ♦ 8 7 ♣ A 10 6 2 bid three spades over partner's one no-trump.

If the distribution is balanced, the requirements are 2½ or more honour-tricks with any five-card biddable suit.

Two honour-tricks or a shade more with a six-card major suit.

Bid three spades with ♠ A Q 6 5 3 2 ♥ 8 7 ♦ 4 2 ♣ K J 5.[1]

Finally, with any hand containing about three honour-tricks, a forcing bid may be made regardless of the distribution.

Bid three spades with ♠ K Q 5 4 ♥ A Q 6 2 ♦ K 7 ♣ 8 4 3.

THE JUMP TO GAME

Some hands containing long major suits with six or more cards are too weak in honour-tricks for a forcing suit take-out, which may tempt the opener to make a disastrous slam try. Yet a very long suit will develop so many winners that game at a major is probable and the responder cannot take

[1] This hand is *too strong* for a direct raise to three no-trump.

a chance of making the weak response of two in a suit and having the opener pass him out.

The responder should jump to game immediately in his major suit, holding:

At least a six-card major suit.

About 1-plus honour trick, but no more than 1½ honour-tricks. With more than 1½ honour-tricks, a forcing take-out could be made.

Unbalanced distribution, unless the suit has at least seven cards.

With a seven-card suit the responder may jump to game with ½ honour-trick and with an eight-card suit he needs no honour-trick at all. This response is quite a logical one, when the count of winners is considered.

♠ Q J 10 9 7 4 3 ♥ 9 ♦ 6 4 2 ♣ 8 5

The spade suit will develop five sure winners and the opening no-trump bid has shown about five winners in the opener's hand. The total is ten, and four spades should be bid at once.

The jump to four in a minor suit should never be made with less than a seven-card suit, and usually requires an eight-card minor suit. Even with no outside strength, a slam is by no means out of the question if the minor suit is something like A K Q x x x x x. Therefore with a suit containing the tops the forcing take-out is preferable to an immediate game bid.

REBIDS BY THE OPENING NO-TRUMP BIDDER

After partner's response, the opening no-trump bidder becomes in turn the *responding hand.* His procedure will be governed by two principal questions:

1. What does my partner already know about my hand and what else of value can I tell him?

2. What are the *minimum* and *maximum* values already shown to me by his response?

Partner has for safety's sake already assumed a minimum such as

♠ K Q 3 ♥ A J 4 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ J 10 6 2

Anything somewhat better than such a minimum is 'news' and may be rebid by the opener.

THE RESPONSE WAS TWO NO-TRUMP

The opening hand should now:

(*a*) *Bid three in a biddable major suit.*

As with ♠ A Q 6 2 ♥ A J 5 ♦ A Q 4 ♣ Q 9 3.

Here a bid of three in a suit is an indirect bid of three no-trump. Since you have decided to bid three no-trump anyway, why not show *en passant* a biddable four-card suit in case partner happens to hold four trumps?

If he happenes to hold, opposite the hand just mentioned, ♠ K 9 7 3 ♥ Q 7 4 ♦ K 6 3 2 ♣ 10 5, the game is best played at spades.

(*b*) *Bid three no-trump* even with but slightly better than 4 honour-tricks provided they are distributed in four suits; but with 4½ honour-tricks or 4 fat honour-tricks they may be distributed in only three suits.

(*c*) *Pass* only if holding the bare 4 honour-tricks.

THE RESPONSE WAS THREE NO-TRUMP

The opener must unqualifiedly pass, for slam is out of the question even with a maximum of 5 honour-tricks. Partner cannot hold more than 2½ honour-tricks, unless his distribution is insipid (or he would have forced).

THE RESPONSE WAS TWO IN A SUIT

A suit take-out of the opening no-trump bid shows a maximum of about one honour-trick, for with more the responder would probably have bid two no-trump. The suit take-out, therefore, warns the opener that game is probably out of the question unless the opening no-trump bid was in the maximum class, with about five honour-tricks, or unless the opener has such strong support for the responders' suit that its long cards can almost surely be established and used at no-trump.

There are three cases in which the opener should rebid over a suit take-out of two:

(1) When he has 4½ or more honour-tricks, with all unbid suits stopped.

♠ A K 2 ♥ K 8 5 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ Q 8 5 4

Partner's response to the opening one no-trump bid was two clubs. Rebid two no-trump.

(2) When the opener, although holding only four honour-tricks, has a hand strong in playing strength with 8 honour-cards or more, still provided he has all three unbid suits stopped.

♠ K 8 7 ♥ A K J ♦ K Q 6 ♣ J 10 7 5

Partner's response to the opening one no-trump bid was two spades. Rebid two no-trump.

(3) When the opener, although holding no added honour-trick, has strong support for his partner's suit—A x x, K J x or better. This makes it most probable that responder's suit will produce tricks at no-trump. In this case also the other three suits must be stopped in the opener's hand.

♠ A J 8 ♥ Q J 7 ♦ K J 5 4 ♣ A J 3

Partner's response to the opening one no-trump bid was two spades. Rebid two no-trump because of the spade support.

With less than this strength, the opener should pass, the only exception being when he has more than 4½ honour-tricks yet has one suit unstopped. A hand of this type, being above the minimum in honour-tricks, justifies a rebid when the opener has a biddable suit of his own, or is in a position to raise the responder's suit.

THE REBID OF TWO NO-TRUMP

Unless holding a higher-ranking biddable suit than responder's suit, or the very specialized trump strength required for a raise in responder's suit, the opener's rebid (if he can rebid at all) should be two no-trump.

♠ A K 6 ♥ A 7 5 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ K J 10 7

Over partner's take-out of two diamonds bid two no-trump. A bid of *three* clubs would be required to show the suit.

THE REBID IN A NEW SUIT

Provided he is able to show a biddable suit without raising the bidding to the three level, the opener may show any

biddable suit over his partner's suit take-out, if he has rebid values.

♠ Q 10 9 ♥ Q J 5 4 ♦ A K Q ♣ A 5 2

Over two clubs rebid two hearts.

THE RAISE IN RESPONDER'S SUIT

The opener should be very careful to raise the responder's suit only in the following circumstances:

(1) He must have A K x or A Q x in the responder's suit and he must have all of the unbid suits stopped. If he is weak in any unbid suit, his hand should contain a minimum of 4½ honour-tricks.

This applies in all cases to a raise in a minor suit and in most cases to a raise in a major suit.

For example, assuming the bidding to have been

South	North
1 N T	2 ♥

South should now bid three hearts, holding

♠ K 10 5 ♥ A Q 6 ♦ A J 8 4 ♣ K J 7

He should pass even though holding strong trump support if his hand is

♠ K Q 6 ♥ A Q 5 ♦ A Q 7 3 ♣ 7 6 4

because one suit is wide open, and he has no added honour-trick strength in his hand. He cannot show his biddable diamond suit because it would require a bid of three diamonds, for which his hands is not strong enough.

(2) With 4½ or more honour-tricks and with four cards of responder's major suit, the opener may raise the major suit. When he raises, he deceives the responder to the extent of making him think the trump support is A Q x or A K x. He is willing to do this, because if the responder now bids three no-trump, the opener is strong enough to return to four of the major suit. If the responder is too weak to try for three no-trump, he will pass at three of his major suit and the contract should be made.

The raise by the opener with A K x or A Q x is a very neat one. Say your partner bid one no-trump and you hold

♠ 5 2 ♥ 4 3 ♦ Q J 8 7 4 2 ♣ 6 5 3

You bid two diamonds and the opener now bids three diamonds, telling you that he definitely holds ♦ A K x. You can, without hesitation, bid three no-trump.

THE RESPONSE WAS THREE OF A SUIT

The opener now knows from the forcing response that partner has a minimum of about 2 or 2½ honour tricks. The opener's rebids will be slightly different if the forcing take-out is in a major or a minor suit.

If a *minor*, opener should:

1. Show any biddable four-card major suit.

Bid three hearts, over three clubs or three diamonds, with ♠ K 8 6 ♥ A Q 7 4 ♦ A Q 3 ♣ K 5 2.

2. Raise to four with three trumps headed by A K x or A Q x or K Q x of partner's suit.

Bid four diamonds over three diamonds with ♠ K 7 3 ♥ A K 4 ♦ K Q 6 ♣ K 10 7 3.

3. Bid four no-trump if holding a maximum (five honour-tricks), or a near maximum (about 4½ with eight or nine honour-cards);

♠ K J 4 ♥ A Q 10 3 ♦ A Q 5 ♣ K Q 2

Otherwise, bid three no-trump.

If a *major:*

1. Show another four-card major if higher ranking.

2. Raise to four with any four trumps, or with three trumps headed by A K x, A Q x, K Q x.

3. Bid four no-trump with five honour-tricks or slightly less but with eight or nine honour-cards.

Otherwise, bid three no-trump.

When the Responder bids four in a suit over the opening one no-trump:

1. Pass a major suit.

2. Raise a minor suit to five with anything but a minimum.

The reader need not learn or remember all the minutiæ and shadings in requirements given above. My object was merely to trace the workings of an expert player's mind and

to point out how an extra pip or a card, a slightly different complexion of the cards or a stray Queen often directs the selection of the final bid. All the player needs to remember is the four honour-tricks and the 4-3-3-3 hand-pattern. But above all the responder must understand the striking and profound differences among the hand-patterns that regulate the choice between the suit and no-trump.

CHAPTER IX

OPENING BIDS OF TWO NO-TRUMP

The opening bids of two, three, four or more in no-trump serve to give a clear picture of a hand strong in honour-tricks but with no distributional values to make a slam probable. The responder himself can bid a slam if he can supply the distributional values. The following schedule of requirements for opening no-trump bids shows how the honour-trick holding varies while the distributional information remains always the same—a 4-3-3-3 hand-pattern.

HONOUR-TRICKS		BID
3½	with 8 or more honour-cards	1 no-trump
4, 4½, 5	*bare* honour-tricks	1 no-trump
5½, 6, 6½	(sometimes 5 honour-tricks with 9 or 10 honour-cards)	2 no-trump
7½, 7½, 8	(sometimes 6½ honour-tricks with 8 sure winners)	3 no-trump
8½	with 10 sure tricks	4 no-trump
More than 8½	with 11 or 12 sure tricks	5 or 6 no-trump

WHEN THE DISTRIBUTIONAL NO-TRUMP IS NOT USED

The reader will notice that according to the schedule shown above every 4-3-3-3 hand is classified in one of the levels of no-trump bidding, depending on the honour-trick holding. These are, however, subject to modification because different hands which count to the same number of honour-tricks vary greatly in playing strength depending upon their content of honour-cards.

A hand with five bare honour-tricks (♠ A 4 3 ♥ A 7 5 ♦ A 8 6 3

♣ A K 9) is no better than most hands with about 4½ honour-tricks but seven or eight honour-cards (♠ K J 10 ♥ A Q 7 3 ♦ K Q 7 ♣ A 9 5). Most hands with five honour-tricks are one-bids in a suit or one no-trump bids, but some with nine or more honour-cards are good enough for a two no-trump bid (♠ K Q 9 5 ♥ A J 6 ♦ K Q 10 ♣ A Q J).

Hands containing 6½ honour-tricks, listed above as falling within the range of two no-trump bids, are far better opening bids of three no-trump when ten or more honour-cards are held (♠ A K 6 ♥ K Q J ♦ K Q 10 5 ♣ A K 7).

THE SPECIAL RANGE OF 5-5½ HONOUR-TRICKS

Around the five honour-trick level the greatest problem is caused by hands which are too strong for an opening one no-trump bid and yet too weak for a bid of two no-trump. They contain 5 or 5-plus honour-tricks with seven or eight honour-cards, or they contain 5½ *bare* honour-tricks (perhaps only six honour-cards). If one no-trump were bid on such a hand partner might pass, expecting the average four honour-trick holding in the opening hand, and a game would be missed. If two no-trump were bid originally, partner might raise with far too little. Such hands are best opened with a one-bid in a suit, when necessary an unbiddable minor (page 134).

If partner is strong enough to respond at all (showing about one honour-trick) the opener can jump to two or three no-trump, depending upon intermediates; if partner passes, game is probably out of the question.

No. 1. ♠ A Q 5 ♥ K J 7 ♦ A 8 5 4 ♣ A Q J bid one diamond.

No. 2. ♠ A K 3 ♥ 8 5 4 2 ♦ A K 7 ♣ A Q 4 bid one club.

Partner will keep the bidding open with one no-trump, holding:

♠ 8 6 2 ♥ 10 7 3 ♦ Q 6 2 ♣ K 7 5 3

The opener will then raise him to two no-trump, with No. 1, and to three no-trump, with No. 2. With less, partner would have passed the opening bid, but game could not be made.

THE OPENING BID OF TWO NO-TRUMP

Make a bid of an opening two no-trump in any position, vulnerable or not vulnerable, holding:

4-3-3-3 distribution.
Every suit stopped (Q 10 x or better)
5½ to 6½ honour-tricks.

Bid two no-trump holding:

♠ Q 10 6 5	♠ A J 10	♠ K J 7
♥ A K 6	♥ K 10 7	♥ A Q 8
♦ K Q J	♦ A K J 6	♦ A K 9
♣ A Q J	♣ A Q 2	♣ A K 4 3

The opening two no-trump bid, though very powerful, *is not forcing*. Partner may pass with a blank hand.

WHEN TO VARY THE REQUIREMENTS

The two no-trump bid is of great advantage on very strong hands which contain so many honour-tricks that there is danger of partner's passing an opening one-bid and yet whose distributional nature makes an opening forcing two-bid in a suit misleading to partner.

Two no-trump may, therefore, be bid without the usual 4-3-3-3 distribution in the following cases:

4-4-3-2 distribution—when the doubleton is very strong (A J); usually when neither four-card suit is a major.

Example: ♠ A Q ♥ K J 7 ♦ A Q 7 6 ♣ A K 10 9.

To bid two no-trump with 4-4-3-2 distribution and any four-card major may keep the partnership out of a makeable major suit game. It should be done, however, when the hand is so crammed with honour-cards that there is grave danger of partner's passing an opening suit bid.

♠ A K Q 7 ♥ A Q ♦ Q J 10 8 ♣ A Q J

bid two no-trump, since one spade may be passed. However, with

♠ K Q 10 5 ♥ A 10 7 3 ♦ A K ♣ A Q 5

one spade should be bid because the best play for game will be in a major if partner has four spades or four hearts.

5-3-3-2 distribution—a hand with a strong minor suit and the other suits stopped may be opened with a two no-trump bid provided:

(*a*) The five-card minor is headed by at least A K Q.

(*b*) The hand contains 4½ honour-tricks and has at least K 2 in every suit.

(*c*) Partner has previously passed and is unlikely to try for a losing slam.

A two no-trump bid is permissible third or fourth hand with ♠ A 6 3 ♥ K J ♦ A K Q J 7 ♣ K Q 8.

This bid may at times lead to a successful game contract when partner is too weak to respond to a suit bid. It will always have the effect of discouraging the opponents from entering the bidding and perhaps finding an opportunity to make a paying sacrifice.

6-3-2-2 distribution—the two-no-trump bid on a hand containing a six-card minor suit falls in the same group with the two no-trump bid when holding a five-card minor. There should be at least 4½ honour-tricks in the hand and the minor suit should be A K Q x x x or better. This bid also should be made only when partner has passed.

Example: ♠ Q 10 3 ♥ A 7 ♦ A 5 ♣ A K Q 6 5 4.

RESPONSES TO OPENING TWO NO-TRUMP BIDS

Raise partner's two no-trump to three no-trump if holding:

(*a*) ½ (sometimes less) to 1½ honour-tricks.

This includes any such holding as K x, Q J x, Q x and Q x, Q x and J 10 x, etc. It may be reduced to Q x and J x in different suits and even to two four-card suits headed by the Jack.

(*b*) Any five-card minor suit headed by the Queen or better (Q x x x x) even without outside strength.

Raise partner's opening two no-trump bid to three no-trump with:

♠ K 8 5	♥ 7 6 3	♦ 9 7 5 2	♣ 7 5 4
♠ Q 6 4 2	♥ J 7 5	♦ 8 6 4	♣ 6 3 2
♠ 7 4	♥ 8 6 5	♦ J 9 7 3	♣ J 10 5 4
♠ 7 6 2	♥ 8 5	♦ Q 7 5 4 2	♣ 9 8 4

However, with a five-card minor headed by the Queen, and a four-card major outside, a suit take-out is better, hoping that the opener can rebid in a four-card major. Thus, bid three diamonds with

♠ 9 6 5 4 ♥ 8 5 ♦ Q 7 5 4 2 ♣ 9 4

With more than 1½ honour-tricks the responder should usually try for a slam unless his hand, also, has 4-3-3-3 distribution.

SUIT TAKE-OUTS OF TWO NO-TRUMP BIDS

Taking out partner's opening suit bid with three of any suit may show a weak hand with which the responder wishes merely to play at game but has no slam aspirations; or it may be made on a strong hand when the responder's plan is to make a slam try later.

Even with a very strong hand the responder is safe in bidding three of his suit over his partner's two no-trump, since the two no-trump bidder is not permitted to pass until a game is reached.

The minimum requirements for a take-out of two no-trump with three of a suit are:

(*a*) Any five-card major suit headed by the Queen or better; or a five-card minor suit headed by the Queen with any four-card major suit in the hand.

(*b*) Any five-card major suit headed by J 10 if the distribution of the hand is unbalanced.

(*c*) Any six-card suit, major or minor, with or without honours.

From these minimums the strength of the responding hand when he makes a suit take-out may range up to any maximum. The type of his hand will be shown by the responder's next bid.

SIGN-OFF

With a six-card suit and a weak hand the proper treatment is to rebid the suit, even if partner's rebid is three no-trump. Bidding the suit a second time acts as a sign-off, denying even so much as a Queen in the hand. If the suit is a major, game will already have been reached, for the rebid will have been at the level of four. If the suit is a minor, the rebid tells the opening hand that game is not possible and that the bidding should be dropped at four of the minor.

Holding only a five-card minor suit headed by the Queen or a six-card minor suit headed by the Queen or better, partner should be allowed to play the hand at three no-trump.

With a weak hand he should go on to game in any six-card major suit, or with a five-card major suit and unbalanced distribution. With balanced distribution he should pass three no-trump only if his major suit is headed by the Queen or better.

THE PASS

The maximum shown by a pass is less than ½ honour-trick, and either no suit longer than four cards or a five-card suit not headed by a Queen or better.

♠ 6 5 ♥ Q 5 4 2 ♦ 8 6 5 ♣ 10 7 6 4
♠ Q 8 3 ♥ 7 4 ♦ 10 8 6 4 2 ♣ 8 5 3

HOW TO MAKE A SLAM TRY

The opening two no-trump bid shows at least 5½ honour-tricks and three cards in support of any suit. The partnership is therefore in the slam zone when the responding hand holds about 1½ honour-tricks with a fair five-card suit, even when his distribution is balanced (5-3-3-2 or 5-4-2-2).

Any six-card suit with about 1½ honour-tricks in the hand also warrants a slam try.

The slam try is made in one of three ways:

1. With a strong six-card or longer suit such as Q K x x x x or A x x x x x and ½ to 1 honour-trick outside, the responding hand should jump at once to four of his suit over two no-trump.

2. With only a five-card suit or a weak six-card suit but with a second biddable or near-biddable suit the responder should first bid three of his suit and then, if the rebid is three no-trump, bid four of the second suit.

3. With about two honour-tricks and balanced distribution the responder should first show his suit, in order to let his partner know where his strength lies, and then if the rebid is three no-trump he should raise to four no-trump. The four no-trump bid in this case is not conventional.

Over partner's opening two no-trump bid:

1. With ♠ K J 10 8 6 4 ♥ 3 2 ♦ K 5 4 ♣ 7 3 Bid four spades.
2. With ♠ Q 8 7 6 2 ♥ 4 3 ♦ K Q 7 5 4 ♣ 9 Bid three spades. If partner rebids three no-trump, next bid the diamond suit.

3. With ♠ J 8 3 ♥ Q J 5 2 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ 9 5 4 Bid three hearts. If partner rebids three no-trump, raise to four no-trump. If partner raises to four hearts, bid four no-trump (not conventional).

THE OPENER'S REBIDS

The opening two no-trump bidder should raise partner's major-suit take-out to game with any four trumps.

If partner's take-out is in a minor suit, the opener should show any biddable four-card major suit. He should also show a biddable spade suit if partner's take-out is three hearts.

Any suit take-out can be raised with only three trumps, if they are A K x, A Q x or K Q x; but when a raise is given with only three trumps the opener must have a near-maximum two no-trump bid (6 to 6½ honour-tricks).

When partner makes a slam try, the opener must remember that he has already shown 5½ honour-tricks, and without at least 6 honour-tricks he must as a rule make minimum rebids.[1]

DISTRIBUTIONAL NO-TRUMP BIDDING

1. OPENING ONE NO-TRUMP: DISTRIBUTIONAL RAISE

♠ K 5 4 ♥ Q 10 7 5 ♦ A Q 9 ♣ A Q J	N W E S	♠ A J 8 7 6 2 ♥ 8 3 ♦ 7 5 4 ♣ 10 6

West	East
1 N T	2 N T
3 N T	

West, with 4-plus honour-tricks, has added strength justifying a rebid. Ten tricks at spades would depend upon the success of two finesses; nine tricks at no-trump can be made except against very bad breaks.

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[1] See Slam Bidding (Chapters 25 to 27). Opening bids of three, four, five and six no-trump belong properly to the Slam Zone and are discussed in Chapter 27.

2. STRENGTH-SHOWING REBID AFTER ONE NO-TRUMP

♠ K 5 3	N	♠ Q J 8 6 4
♥ A Q J 5	W E	♥ 9 7 4 2
♦ A K 7	S	♦ 8 5 3
♣ Q J 6		♣ 7

West	East
1 N T	2 ♠
3 ♥	4 ♥

When West raises the bidding to the level of three he shows a near-maximum one no-trump bid (in this case West has 4½ plus honour-tricks). East therefore raises to four hearts, though he has only ½ honour-trick. The game at hearts depends at worst upon a finesse.

3. SIGN-OFF WITH A WEAK SIX-CARD SUIT

♠ K 9 5	N	♠ 10 8 6 4 3 2
♥ K Q 7	W E	♥ 7 5
♦ A K 4 2	S	♦ 8 6 3
♣ K Q 3		♣ 9 2

West	East
1 N T	2 ♠
2 N T	3 ♠

West has 4½ honour-ticks, but obeys the sign-off bid in spades. Three spades can probably be made: in no-trump, even one-odd would be doubtful unless the spades are divided 2-2.

4. PASS OF PARTNER'S SUIT TAKE-OUT

♠ K 7 3	N	♠ 8 6
♥ A K 5	W E	♥ Q 9 8 7 3
♦ Q 8 7	S	♦ 9 6 4
♣ A 5 4 2		♣ K 6 3

West	East
1 N T	2 ♥
Pass	

West, with a bare minimum, must pass in spite of his powerful support for hearts. The raise in partner's suit shows not only strong trump support, but general rebid values in the hand.

Even if East has a six-card suit, West knows that nine tricks at no-trump will be almost impossible to make. With the above hands, if West bid two no-trump or three hearts, East would bid three no-trump, which could be made only in exceptional circumstances, and which would be defeated badly if hearts were not divided 3-2.

5. OPENING TWO NO-TRUMP BID; WEAK RAISE TO GAME

♠ K Q 10 5	N	♠ J 6
♥ A K J	W E	♥ 6 4 3
♦ A Q	S	♦ 9 6 5 3
♣ K J 7 5		♣ Q 4 3 2

West	East
2 N T	3 N T
Pass	

Though holding a biddable major suit, West fears that East may pass an opening suit-bid. He therefore bids two no-trump. East raises to three no-trump, but would have passed any opening suit-bid of one. West's hand is too weak for a *forcing* two-bid in a suit, for game would be a bad gamble if East had any weaker hand than the one he has.

6. OPENING TWO NO-TRUMP BID; FINAL MAJOR-SUIT CONTRACT

♠ A K 9	N	♠ 6 5
♥ A Q J 5	W E	♥ 10 7 4 3
♦ K J 6	S	♦ Q 8 4 3 2
♣ A Q 8		♣ 7 6

West	East
2 N T	3 ♦
3 ♥	4 ♥

East has the minimum for bidding over partner's opening two no-trump bid—a five-card suit headed by the Queen. In this case he prefers to bid the suit rather than raise to three no-trump, because a better fit may be found in hearts. When West shows a biddable heart suit, East raises to game in that suit, since the diamond suit will be of value at no-trump only if one opponent holds a doubleton Ace.

7. RAISE IN PARTNER'S SUIT; RETURN TO NO-TRUMP

♠ K 10 7 5	N	♠ 4 3 2
♥ A J 5	W E	♥ 9 6
♦ A K 9	S	♦ Q 8 6 5 4 3 2
♣ Q J 6		♣ 7

West	East
1 N T	2 ♦
3 ♦	3 N T

East takes out the opening no-trump bid, planning to sign-off with three diamonds if West's rebid is two no-trump. When West raises diamonds, however, East knows he has ♦ A K x, and at least two honour-tricks outside. This will produce seven diamond tricks and two other honour-tricks, nine in all. East therefore returns to no-trump.

8. RAISE IN PARTNER'S SUIT; MAJOR-SUIT GAME

♠ J 10 5 4	N	♠ K 8 7 6 3 2
♥ A K 5	W E	♥ 8 4 3
♦ K Q J	S	♦ 9 2
♣ A 9 5		♣ 7 6

West	East
1 N T	2 ♠
3 ♠	3 N T
4 ♠	

West first deceives his partner by raising spades; East thinks West has A Q x in spades, and bids three no-trump, expecting six spade tricks plus West's 2½ outside honour-tricks, producing at worst a finesse for three no-trump. West, having deceived his partner about the spade holding, now bids game in spades. The reason for raising a major-suit with four trumps is that the final contract of three in the major is better than two no-trump if partner is so weak that he must pass either bid.

CHAPTER X

BIDDABLE TRUMP SUITS

One of the greatest advantages accruing to the player who obtains the final contract is that he names the trump suit of his choice.

The first object of the bidder is to have *more* cards of his trump suit than any other player. If he does not hold at least four trumps some other player must have more than he. Therefore no suit can be considered biddable unless it contains at least four cards.

The second object of the bidder is, that even if another player happens to have as many trumps they must not be as good as his. Therefore a minimum biddable suit must include certain high cards. The longer the bidder's trump suit, the less likelihood that another player will have as many, and the requirements in high cards are correspondingly decreased.

MINIMUM BIDDABLE SUITS

With rare exceptions, a player should not make a free bid in any suit weaker than:

Four cards, headed by the Jack and at least one higher honour. Minimum: Q J 3 2, K J 3 2, A J 3 2, etc.

Five cards, headed by the Jack (or any higher honour). Minimum: J 5 4 3 2, Q 5 4 3 2, K 5 4 3 2, etc.

These suits are biddable only once. Having made one bid with such a suit, a player should not bid it again unless partner has raised, showing strength in the suit.

A four-card length should not be bid a second time, even when partner has raised it, unless there is no other rebid available. Partner's raise may have been given with only a three-card trump holding such as Q 8 4, and it is seldom desirable to play a hand with a trump suit in which you hold only seven trumps to the opponents' six. With one more trump in the combined hands of declarer and dummy the advantage is eight to the opponents' five, which is a safe margin of superiority.

REBIDDABLE SUITS

A five-card suit headed by both the Ace and King, or by any three honours (ten or higher) may be bid and then rebid once, even if partner has not shown support by raising. This type of suit is called a rebiddable suit. Examples: A K 4 3 2, Q J 10 3 2, K J 10 3 2, A Q 10 3 2, etc.

Any six-card suit is rebiddable and may be bid a second time without waiting for support from partner. This includes suits such as 9 7 6 4 3 2.

No suit of fewer than five cards is rebiddable, but the following five-card suits are on the borderline between minimum biddable and rebiddable suits:

A Q 7 4 3 or A J 9 6 5 or K Q 9 7 4

Such suits should not be rebid when another safe bid is available; but when the player's hand warrants a second bid, or when a rebid is forced by the bidding situation, the above suits may be bid a second time in a pinch.

STRONG REBIDDABLE SUITS

A suit containing five or more sure trump tricks is called a *strong rebiddable* suit, and may be bid three times without support. The length of the suit may range from five cards to eight or even more cards:

A K Q J 7 A K Q 6 4 2 K Q 8 6 5 4 2
Q J 10 7 6 5 2 A K 9 7 5 3 2

Among the strong rebiddable suits are two types which, having distinct characteristics of their own, are separately classified:

Nearly ready-made suits, which are at least six cards in length and are headed by four of the five honours; or are seven cards in length and headed by three of the four top honours. The principal quality of such suits is that they contain not more than one loser, except against extremely improbable division of the remaining cards:

K Q J 10 3 2 A K Q 10 3 2 A Q J 10 3 2
A Q J 8 6 4 2 A K J 10 3 2

Ready-made suits go a step farther up the ladder. They also are at least six cards in length, and cannot reasonably be expected to lose a trick:

A K Q J 3 2 A K Q 5 4 3 2

ADEQUATE TRUMP SUPPORT

The minimum biddable suits listed above could not safely be handled if the bidder's partner were not strictly limited, in raising, to hands containing *adequate trump support.* The trump strength necessary to be considered adequate depends upon the number of times the suit has been bid.

Adequate trump support for a suit which has been bid only once (and must therefore be assumed to be a minimum biddable suit) is:

Three cards headed by at least the Queen, or any four small cards:

Q 3 2 K 3 2 A 3 2 or 5 4 3 2

Without so much in partner's trump suit a player should not raise until he has heard his partner rebid the suit (although J 10 x is usually equivalent to Q x x [page 115]). The responder should find some response other than a raise, and failing to find one should pass.

Even though Q 3 2, K 3 2 and A 3 2 are adequate trump support, the player should avoid raising immediately when some other good bid is available.

SUPPORT FOR A REBID SUIT

When the trump suit has been rebid without support (that is, when it has been bid twice) partner is allowed to raise with slightly less: Q 2, K 2, A 2, or any three small cards. The greater strength which the bidder has guaranteed that he holds in his trump suit makes up for the lessened strength in the partner's hand.

A strong rebiddable trump suit, which can be recognized when it has been bid three times, actually is a safe trump suit without support, and partner can raise it with only one small trump in his hand.

THE BIDDING LEVEL

Bidding a suit three times (that is, rebidding it twice) is no different from starting with an opening bid of three in the suit. When a player makes an opening suit-bid of three or four his partner may safely assume that he has a strong re-

biddable suit, and may, in a pinch, raise with a singleton trump.

Similarly, when a suit is bid at the level of one-odd the assumption is that the suit contains but four cards. A bid at the level of two-odd usually shows a fair rebiddable five-card or longer suit, and partner may therefore raise with three small trumps or with Q x if his hand is strong.

This principle does not apply to a forcing two-bid or to a forcing take-out, which may be made at any level on a four-card biddable suit; nor does it apply altogether to overcalls and responses at the range of three in a suit.

When partner has opened with one spade, for example, and an opponent overcalls with two hearts, a bid of three clubs by the responder can be trusted to show a rebiddable suit, but not necessarily a strong rebiddable suit, and no raise should be given without three trumps or Q x.

SHADED SUITS

The minimum biddable suits, weak though they are, may yet be shaded somewhat in certain instances. There are cases in which a four-card minor suit as weak as Q x x x may be bid and other cases in which a major suit such as Q 10 x x is considered biddable. Such weak suits must not be bid, however, except in the following circumstances:

1. When the player has previously bid another, lower-ranking suit, so that his partner can clearly infer that the second suit contains only four cards. Partner is not expected to raise a four-card suit knowingly without four trumps.

Example:

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠			

South holds ♠ K 10 6 4 ♥ 7 ♦ A 10 6 5 4 ♣ A Q 6

With five spades he would have bid spades first; therefore North can read him for a four-card spade length.

2. When the shaded suit is a minor, causing little fear that partner will raise to game. Since eleven tricks are required for a minor-suit game, partner will first try to find a suitable major-suit or no-trump contract. In this connection see pages 133-135 on the Principle of Preparedness.

3. When, at times, the bidding situation calls for a bid and no genuine biddable suit is available. Here it is largely a matter of choosing between two evils, the lesser evil being to bid a shaded suit.

For example, a player holds

♠ 8 6 4 2 ♥ A K ♦ 9 8 4 3 2 ♣ A K

It is better to bid one diamond than to pass four honour-tricks and risk losing a game.

Likewise, in responding to partner's bid of one heart:

♠ A 10 6 3 ♥ 5 3 2 ♦ K 8 7 6 4 ♣ 5

To bid one no-trump will risk suppressing a possible good fit in spades; to bid two diamonds will carry the bidding too high on so weak a hand. The proper response is one spade.

WHEN A SUIT NEED NOT BE BIDDABLE

The requirements given for biddable suits apply to cases in which the player bids a suit of his own free will. In one case—when a player is responding to his partner's take-out double (page 218)—he must often bid a suit which is not biddable. However, in this case partner will not expect to find a biddable suit.

Following is a table listing the types of biddable suits and necessary trump support. The requirements given apply only to trump strength; certain values in outside honour-tricks are equally necessary for most bids.

BIDDABLE TRUMP SUITS

FOR BIDS, REBIDS AND RAISES

MINIMUM BIDDABLE SUITS			ADEQUATE TRUMP SUPPORT
Suits which may be bid only once without support			*Trump holding necessary for partner to raise a suit which has been bid only once:*
Q J x x	A K x x	A K Q x	Q x x
K J x x	A Q x x	A K J x	K x x or x x x x
A J x x	K Q J x	A Q J x	A x x (any four trumps)
J x x x x	K Q x x	K x x x x	A double raise (from one to three) requires
A x x x x	Q J x x x	A 10 x x x	J x x x or x x x x x
	Q x x x x		(any five trumps)

These suits should not be bid a second time unless partner

has raised; and should be bid (for the first time) at the level of two only with very strong hands.

In exceptional cases only, J 10 x may be considered equivalent to Q x x. When no other bid is available, a double raise may sometimes be given with A K x, A Q x, K Q x, A J x.

REBIDDABLE SUITS

Suits which may be bid twice, whether partner has raised or not:

A K x x x A Q J x x K Q 10 x x
A K Q x x A Q 10 x x K J 10 x x
A K J x x A J 10 x x Q J 10 x x
A K 10 x x K Q J x x x x x x x x (*any* six cards)

The following suits may be bid a second time without support only when no better rebid is available:

A Q x x x K Q x x x A J x x x

Particularly when the suit contains the 9.

STRONG REBIDDABLE SUITS

Suits which may be bid three times (or may be bid for the first time at the level of three or higher):

A K Q x x x K Q x x x x x
A x x x x x x Q J 10 x x x x
K Q J 9 x x
A Q J 9 x x
10 x x x x x x x (any eight cards)

ADEQUATE TRUMP SUPPORT

When a suit has been bid twice without support, partner may raise with:

Q x
K x or x x x
A x (any three trumps)

This usually applies also to a suit which is bid for the first time at the level of two.

A *double* raise may be given to a suit which has been rebid, holding:

Q x x or x x x x
J 10 x (any four trumps)

ADEQUATE TRUMP SUPPORT

A suit on which a pre-emptive bid of three or four is made; or a suit which has been bid three times (rebid twice) *without support, requires only:*

ONE SMALL TRUMP

in support. Partner may raise with a singleton, but should prefer some other bid unless his singleton is Queen, King or Ace.

NEARLY READY-MADE SUITS

A K Q 10 x x A Q J 10 x x
A K J 10 x x K Q 10 x x
A Q J x x x x A K J x x x x
A K x x x x x x K Q J x x x x
(These suits are unlikely to lose more than one trick.)

READY-MADE SUITS

A K Q J x x A K Q x x x x
(These suits are unlikely to lose a trick.)

SHADED BIDDABLE SUITS

The following suits may be shown at the level of one in responding to partner's suit or in rebidding; but, except in minor suits and with very strong hands should not be used for any opening bids, or for responses and rebids at the level of two:

A 10 x x and, very rarely A 9 x x
K 10 x x Q 10 x x K 9 x x

ADEQUATE TRUMP SUPPORT

Nearly ready-made and ready-made suits require no support in the trump suit, but partner should nevertheless not raise without at least one trump.

ADEQUATE TRUMP SUPPORT

When partner has reason to fear that the suit may be a shaded suit, he should if possible avoid raising with fewer than four trumps. With any four trumps he may raise.

CHAPTER XI

OPENING SUIT-BIDS OF ONE

A player opens the bidding when he makes the first bid in any deal. His hand is known as the opening hand and he is known as the opener. The first bid is called the opening bid.

The opening bid is more than a contract to take a certain number of tricks. It has the added and equally important function of giving information to partner. The information given is that the opener has:

1. A minimum number of honour-tricks (defensive winners).
2. A minimum number of playing tricks or expected winners at his own bid.
3. The bid also gives a rough clue to the distribution of the hand, due to the fact that the bid names a trump suit guaranteeing a certain minimum length in that suit.

The approximate number of honour-tricks and winners and the general type of distribution will be set within narrow limits by the nature of the first call—whether it is a pass or a bid, and if a bid, whether a suit or a no-trump bid of one, two, three or four.

THE PASS

A pass is not a bid, yet a pass by dealer (or by any other player when the bidding has not been opened) conveys a wealth of negative information to partner, from which the passing hand can be placed within the following limits:

1. *Honour-tricks:* Maximum three, which is improbable, down to minimum zero, which is equally improbable. Usually, from ½ to 2 honour-tricks.

2. *Distribution:* The greater the number of honour-tricks, the less the likelihood that the player holds any biddable suit. The pass may also, in first, second and third positions, be assumed to deny possession of a long, powerful trump suit containing as many as seven or eight winners, for on such a

hand a pre-emptive bid might be made regardless of honour-tricks.

It will at times happen that a player will pass freak hands containing very long suits (even up to a thirteen-card suit) and honour-holdings ranging up to three or even slightly beyond, for reasons of surprise strategy. He will do this rarely, and his partner will be wise not to expect any such contingency.

THE OPENING SUIT-BID OF ONE

The opening suit-bid of one is the ideal bid. Rarely will the best final contract be apparent at the start of the hand, and the opening one-bid in a suit allows for the greatest possible exchange of information while keeping the bidding at the lowest possible level for purposes both of strategy and of safety.

Although it is the lowest bid, a one-bid does not show the weakest possible opening and, particularly in honour-tricks. The playing strength of the hand is a secondary consideration compared to the vital necessity for making the opening one-bid show a fixed minimum number of defensive winners. This minimum should be better than an average share of all the honour-tricks around the table. According to the Rule of Eight there are usually 8 or 8½ honour-tricks in all; therefore the honour-trick requirement for an opening suit-bid of one is 2½ honour-tricks and more often the hand will contain 3 honour-tricks or more.

The number of expected trick-winners in the hand, while theoretically of equal importance, does not require any effort in counting on the part of the opening bidder. Any hand containing 2½ to 3 honour-tricks and a fair biddable suit will simultaneously count to about four winners, which are enough for an opening suit-bid of one.

Finally, the hand should contain a biddable suit, in which the opening bid will be made.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Any opening one-bid in a suit shows at least:

3 honour-tricks with a four-card biddable suit or a weak five-card biddable suit.

2½ honour-tricks with a fair five-card biddable suit, usually a rebiddable suit.

The location of the honour-tricks does not matter; they may be in the trump suit itself or in side suits. The important requirement is that the hand as a whole must have a minimum of 2½ or 3 honour-tricks, depending upon the length and strength of the trump suit, while its maximum may be 5½ honour-tricks.

These minimum requirements apply regardless of whether the opener is vulnerable or not, and whether he is dealer or (after the dealer has passed) in the second, third or fourth position.

The following hands are *minimum* sound opening bids:

1. ♠ Q 7 5 4 ♥ K J 6 5 ♦ A K 6 ♣ 8 2 Bid one heart.
2. ♠ J 7 5 4 2 ♥ K 3 ♦ J 7 5 ♣ A K Q Bid one spade.
3. ♠ K Q 10 8 5 ♥ A 6 2 ♦ Q J 8 ♣ 5 4 Bid one spade.
4. ♠ K 6 5 ♥ 8 6 4 ♦ A K 9 7 6 ♣ 6 4 Bid one diamond.
5. ♠ Q J 5 4 2 ♥ Q 6 ♦ K 6 5 ♣ A Q 8 Bid one spade.

The following hands are *unsound* opening bids because they do not contain enough honour-tricks.

1. ♠ A K 10 8 5 ♥ 10 6 4 ♦ 8 5 3 2 ♣ 6 Pass.
2. ♠ 9 7 ♥ K J 8 5 4 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ 7 6 4 Pass.
3. ♠ Q J 6 5 4 ♥ Q 6 3 ♦ Q 7 5 ♣ A 10 Pass.

The following hands should be passed because they contain no biddable suit.

1. ♠ 9 5 4 ♥ K 6 3 ♦ A K ♣ 8 6 5 3 2
2. ♠ A 10 6 5 ♥ 7 6 3 ♦ A K 8 ♣ 6 4 2
3. ♠ K Q J ♥ K Q J ♦ 9 6 4 2 ♣ Q 5 3

The basic requirements for opening bids are flexible. At times hands containing slightly below the minimum requirements may be bid, and hands containing the minimum requirements or slightly more may be passed.

These modifications and exceptions are based upon considerations of psychology, playing strength, and position.

THE FACTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

The honour requirements for opening bids may be shaded somewhat—but never very much—according to the psychology and skill of partner and opponents. The following hand, which does not contain 2½ honour-tricks, is a good example of the type of hand which may be bid when sitting

opposite a very timid partner who otherwise may be fearful of entering the bidding and who in no case will be misled into contracting for a losing slam:

♠ A K 7 6 5 4 ♥ 9 8 3 2 ♦ 8 4 ♣ 5

A weak and sometimes even a 'semi-psychic' bid is effective against the type of opponent who values his hand more with his ears than with his head and who is more likely to believe his opponents' bidding than the evidence of his own eyes. Such tactics are recommended, however, only for skilful players who are able to take care of themselves—and partner's possible enthusiasm—later in the bidding.

An occasional pass with an extreme type of freak is often very good strategy, leading an opponent later to make a losing penalty double. Holding

♠ — ♥ A Q 10 9 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♦ Q J 6 ♣ —

there is little danger in passing, for one of the other players will surely open the bidding and when such a hand is bid up to four hearts by slow stages there is an excellent chance that the opponents will double when they would not have doubled an opening four-heart bid. This, however, works only against inexperienced players.

THE TRAP PASS

Very rarely should an opening bid be passed, when the distribution of the hand is not freakish. To pass a hand like

♠ A Q 6 ♥ 7 2 ♦ A 10 6 5 ♣ K J 7 4

in the vain hope that the opponents will overbid and can be doubled is the height of guileless optimism. It is far more likely that a game will be lost because partner, holding a hand distributionally strong but weak in honour-tricks, must also pass and the opponents will not have enough strength to open the bidding. Such tactics as passing a strong hand in order to lay a trap can be attempted only against erratic players who open the bidding 'on general principles', in third or fourth positions. Such bidders, who were not uncommon a few years ago, are now so rare that the few survivors of their species are not Bridge players, but anachronisms.

THE FACTOR OF PLAYING STRENGTH

The general playing strength of the hand has a particular effect on hands slightly below the minimum requirements in honour-tricks, but containing a fairly good trump suit and strong distribution.

It may be stated as a general principle that as the playing strength of the hand increases, the honour-trick minimums may be decreased, provided that in no case is an opening one-bid made with less than 2-plus honour-tricks, however strong the hand may be. The cases in which the honour-trick requirements may be revised downward because of playing-tricks are:

1. With five cards in one major suit and four in the other and with strong intermediates (Jacks, tens and nines) an opening bid is justified with about 2-plus honour-tricks.

♠ K 10 9 3 2 ♥ K J 8 7 ♦ A 6 3 ♣ 4 Bid one spade
♠ Q J 6 5 ♥ A 10 7 4 3 ♦ K J 6 ♣ 5 Bid one heart
♠ A K 10 5 4 ♥ Q 10 9 8 ♦ 6 4 ♣ 7 2 Bid one spade

2. A six-card suit headed by all three top honours (A K Q) may be opened without outside strength, except in the case of fourth hand, who must fear to reopen the bidding when his opponents may hold most of the strength in the other three suits.

♠ 6 3 ♥ A K Q 6 5 4 ♦ 4 2 ♣ 8 7 6 Bid one heart

3. With two five-card biddable suits, of which one is a major suit, the bidding may be opened with 2-plus honour-tricks.

♠ K J 7 4 3 ♥ 9 ♦ A Q 6 5 4 ♣ 7 2 Bid one spade
♠ A J 6 5 4 ♥ A 7 6 4 3 ♦ 6 5 ♣ 8 Bid one spade

THE FACTOR OF POSITION

A player faces a different problem of bidding in each of the four positions—first, second, third or fourth hand.

FIRST AND SECOND HANDS

The problems of first and second hands are largely the same. Their principal fear is that partner will make a re-

sponse which is forcing for one round, but which leaves them without a suitable rebid.

If there were not too many important exceptions one could state as a general rule that no hand should be opened *if it does not contain a rebid*, however slight.

♠ A K 6 5 ♥ 7 6 4 ♦ A 5 3 ♣ 9 4 2

If one spade is bid on this hand, and partner responds with two of any other suit, the opener could not safely raise, rebid his spade suit, or bid two no-trump. A pass on this hand is therefore optional.

For the same reason, a hand containing six small cards in a minor suit and 2½ bare honour-tricks may also be passed.

♠ 6 5 ♥ K 7 ♦ 9 8 6 5 4 2 ♣ A K 3

If an opening bid of one diamond is made and partner responds with one spade or one heart, a rebid of two diamonds would mislead him as to the strength of the suit; a rebid of one no-trump would not correctly portray the distribution of the hand. If partner replied with one no-trump, the opener could not safely pass, there being no assurance that his diamond suit would be of value at no-trump; yet a bid of two diamonds might not be safe. Here again the player has the option of passing.

Most Aceless hands containing a bare 2½ honour-tricks should be passed first or second hand, even though they include a rebiddable suit and therefore the technical requirements for an opening bid.

♠ 7 4 ♥ K J 10 8 3 ♦ K Q J ♣ 8 4 2 Pass

WHEN FOURTH HAND SHOULD PASS

The player in fourth position, when the other three players have passed, must decide not only whether or not to open the bidding for himself, but whether or not he should reopen for his opponents.

The requirements for opening bids as given apply generally to all four positions from first to fourth hand, whether vulnerable or not. Fourth hand should nevertheless pass hands containing the bare minimum requirements in the following cases:

1. When his strength is wholly in the minor suits, and he does not hold so much as adequate trump support for either major. In such cases, even though the strength is evenly

divided between the two sides, the opponents with their major suits will be able to take the bidding away from the opener with his minor suits. The following hands should be passed fourth hand:

♠ 6 5 ♥ 8 3 2 ♦ A K 6 5 4 ♣ Q J 3

♠ 8 6 ♥ 7 4 2 ♦ A Q J 8 ♣ A J 6 5

2. When the opponents have a part-score, fourth hand should not open the bidding with the minimum of 2½ honour-tricks unless he has a strong trump suit of his own which he is prepared to rebid, or unless his hand is strong in intermediates and offers probable support for a suit partner may bid.

♠ 7 5 ♥ A J 8 5 2 ♦ A Q 6 ♣ 7 6 3 Pass

♠ Q 10 7 ♥ A Q 8 5 ♦ K 7 4 2 ♣ K 6 Bid one heart

♠ A K 10 6 4 2 ♥ 5 4 ♦ K 8 3 ♣ 9 2 Bid one spade

THIRD-HAND STRATEGIC BIDS

The player who is third hand, when his partner has already passed and his own hand is below normal biddable strength, may reasonably expect that fourth hand will be strong enough to make a bid and that his opponents hold the major portion of the outstanding strength. In order to get in the first blow, to interfere with the opponents' bidding, and to indicate a favourable opening lead against an opposing no-trump contract, the third-hand player can make a strategic bid on a hand containing 1½ to 2 honour-tricks and a fairly strong trump suit.

A third-hand strategic bid is best described as an *anticipated* defensive bid and is based more upon playing strength than upon honour-tricks. The hand should be safe under the Rule of 2 and 3 (page 333).

Third hand must remember that his partner will not know the bid is below the normal strength of opening bids and will respond as though to any opening bid. Of course, an intelligent partner will make an allowance for the possibility of a weak third-hand bid, and will not jump to the sky just because he happens to hold a fair hand. But if the opener has too little, even a contract of one no-trump or two in a suit may be badly defeated.

No strategic third-hand bid should be made when the suit is a ragged one and cannot stand an opening lead from partner.

The following hands are typical of good third-hand strategic bids:

♠ K Q 8 7 5 4	♥ 6	♦ Q J 10	♣ 10 7 2
♠ 8 5	♥ Q 6 3	♦ A Q J 7 4	♣ J 10 8

THE CHOICE OF SUITS

The choice between two or more biddable suits in the opening hand is made by considering:

1. The length of the suits.
2. The rank of the suits.
3. The strength of the suits.

There is a further consideration which has the power to outweigh all three of these purely mathematical guides and this factor, although essentially a part of the third considerations, is sufficiently important to warrant separate listing. It is

4. The Principle of Preparedness.

We shall see later how the Principle of Preparedness may alter the normal choice of the opening bid if the hand includes less than four honour-tricks (or 3½ with well-padded suits). But first let us consider the factors that determine normal choice between two biddable suits. These are Length, Rank and Strength of the Hand.

LENGTH

1. When two five-card or longer suits are of unequal length, bid first the *longer*. (5 and 6, 5 and 7, 6 and 7.)

2. With one six-card or longer suit and one four-card biddable suit (a semi-two-suiter) usually bid the longer suit *twice* before showing the shorter,[1] and if the longer suit is seven cards or more, usually avoid showing the four-card suit at all.

3. With two biddable suits of five and four cards—the commonest type of semi-two-suiter—always bid the longer

[1] When a good four-card major may be shown by a bid of one, the four-card suit should be shown before the six-card suit is rebid.

Example: ♠ A Q 7 5 ♥ 6 ♦ A J 8 5 4 3 ♣ Q 9

If partner responds with one heart to the opening bid of one diamond, rebid one spade rather than two diamonds. (Principle of Economy, page 64.)

suit first if it is higher ranking. When the four-card suit is higher ranking it may sometimes be bid first—particularly with hands of less than four honour-tricks (or 3½ with strong intermediates). Consider the Principle of Preparedness before making the choice.

4. With two or three four-card biddable suits, bid, as a rule, the highest ranking. Hands with two or three four-card suits, however, should never be bid without considering first the Principle of Preparedness.

CHOICE OF SUITS OF UNEQUAL LENGTH

With 6-5, 7-6, 6-4, 7-4: Follow the Principle of Length regardless of honour strength.[1] In these distributional freaks lack of great honour strength is usually made up for by distributional values (winners), and it is of utmost importance to give the correct picture of length.

The Hand	*Bid*	*Rebid*
♠ A K Q 7 6 ♥ 9 2 ♦ K Q 8 7 6 5 ♣ —	1 ♦	spades (twice)
♠ 9 8 6 5 4 3 ♥ A K J 8 2 ♦ A ♣ 6	1 ♠	hearts
♠ K J 7 4 ♥ A 6 ♦ A Q 7 6 4 2 ♣ 9	1 ♦	diamonds[2]
♠ — ♥ A Q 6 3 ♦ A Q J 8 7 6 2 ♣ 8 4	1 ♦	diamonds (twice)
♠ K Q J 8 5 3 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ A 10 7 6 4 3 2	1 ♣	spades (twice)

With 5-4 Distribution: Follow the Principle of Length with all hands containing four or more honour-tricks. (The choice with hands of lower honour-trick strength will be covered under the Principle of Preparedness.)

Bid the longer suit first: show the four-card suit before rebidding the five-card suit.

♠ A K Q 6 ♥ Q 9 ♦ K Q 8 5 4 ♣ K 3	Bid one diamond
♠ A Q 8 4 3 ♥ K J 10 6 ♦ A 7 5 ♣ 4	Bid one spade
♠ 6 ♥ K Q J 5 ♦ K J 7 ♣ A K 6 5 4	Bid one club

[1] Exceptionally, in a hand with minimum honour strength a strong five-card major may be bid in preference to a weak six-card minor.

[2] If partner's response is one heart, the first rebid is one spade. Otherwise rebid diamonds first (unless, of course, a pass is proper).

THE PRINCIPLE OF RANK

With two *five-card or longer* biddable suits *of equal length*, bid first the higher-ranking suit. The only exception to this rule occurs when the higher-ranking suit is extremely weak and the lower-ranking suit is very strong.

Thus, with

♠ A Q 8 5 3	and	♣ K Q J 7 6	Bid on spade
♠ K 9 6 5 4	and	♥ A K J 10 5	Bid one spade
♥ K Q 7 6 3	and	♦ A K Q J 10	Bid one heart
♠ J 6 5 3 2	and	♣ A K Q J 6	Bid one club

THE STRENGTH OF THE HAND

With two four-card suits, prefer as a rule the higher ranking whenever the hand contains four honour-tricks or more ($3\frac{1}{2}$ honour-tricks with well-padded suits or with strength in three suits). In all other cases choice should be made in accordance with the Principle of Preparedness.

I have stated that the Principle of Preparedness is essentially a part of the third factor governing choice of suits—the Strength of the Hand.

The reason why this principle is closely bound up with Strength is because of the quality and quantity inferences which are drawn from the *sequence* of bidding.

THE 'REVERSE'

The bid of a higher ranking suit by a player who has bid one of lower rank is called a 'Reverse'. This reverse when it occurs at the level of two or higher logically depicts a strong hand because it compels partner, if he wishes to express a mere choice for the first-mentioned suit, to climb to a still higher level.

Thus:

North	South		North	South
1 ♦	1 NT	or	1 ♥	2 ♣
2 ♠	3 ♦		2 ♠	3 ♥

In these examples the reverse occurs at the level of two and forces partner to a still higher level to express a choice.

It clearly announces greater strength than the opening bid might include if it were a minimum.

However, when the reverse occurs at the *same* level—the level of one-bids—it does *not* announce that the hand includes greater strength than shown by the opening bid itself (although the hand *may* contain added strength).

Thus:

North	South		North	South
1 ♣	1 ♦	or	1 ♦	1 ♥
1 ♥			1 ♠	

In these examples the reverse occurs at the *same* level and no greater strength than necessary for the opening bid itself may be assumed from the fact of the reverse.

After a game forcing bid, also, the reverse by the opening hand does not necessarily show any greater strength than if the reverse had occurred at the level of one.

Example:

South	North
1 ♦	2 ♥
2 ♠	

(Obviously, over a one-heart response the opening bidder could have reversed at *one* spade.)

What may the partner logically infer from these two different uses of the reverse?

In the first examples, he may expect greater strength than a minimum—and he may also rely on the *count of length* given by the bidding. North's first bid suit is *longer* than his second; probably five and four; possibly six and five. In other words, the choice of first bids has been normal because the strength of the hand did not make necessary a modification of the Principle of Length.

But in the second examples, no such precise count of length should be drawn. North's first bid suit *may* be longer than his second, but the suits may be of equal length—*if the strength of North's hand* was insufficient to warrant bidding in normal order.

Assume that North, with suits of equal length, but with a near-minimum, had chosen entirely on the Principle of Rank. The bidding would then have gone:

North	South		North	South
1 ♥	2 ♦	instead of	1 ♣	1 ♦
3 ♣			1 ♥	

A progression of two rounds, contrary to both the Principle of Economy of Bids and the added strength requirements for the higher rounds. This, though it does not actually bid the suits in reverse order of their rank, has the same effect of forcing partner to make his choice at the level of three-odd, and must therefore show at least as good a hand as the reverse shows.

Summing up the influence of the strength of the hand on the choice of suits:

Avoid the necessity for a reverse at a higher level if the hand contains less than 4 (sometimes 3½) honour-tricks.

With about 4 honour-tricks or 3½ with well-padded suits, the normal choice of opening bid (in accordance with principles of Length and Rank) should be followed even though this may necessitate a reverse in a higher round.

THE PRINCIPLE OF PREPAREDNESS

Since the sequence of the bids interprets the strength of the hand, the probable second bid—the rebid—should usually be considered before the first bid is chosen.

The Principle of Preparedness therefore may *alter* the normal choice of first bids because the normal bid, if made, would become a distorted picture of the hand when modified by the rebid! This consideration and the Principle of Economy of Bids comprise the Principle of Preparedness.

WHY WE USE PREPARED BIDS

Modern bidding has made great strides, but perhaps it has grown too fast for its strength. We have established certain bids as forcing. Yet these bids—the one-over-one and two-over-one take-outs—may be made with very minimum values. At their weakest they may be 'courtesy' bids, made solely to keep the bidding open. At their strongest, they are hands which almost warrant jump take-outs. To protect the weak 'chance-giving' take-out, at the same time as we insure that the *powerful* take-out will be kept open, it is necessary for the sake of safety that the opening bidder can rebid over

any one-round forcing bid not only because he is *forced* to but because he was *prepared* to!

These, then, are the reasons why we employ the Principle of Preparedness in making the choice of first bids:

1. To economize on precious rounds of bidding.
2. To avoid *inferences* of added strength when rebidding.
3. To avoid forcing the responding hand to a level beyond the power of the combined hands.

HOW TO USE THE PRINCIPLE OF PREPAREDNESS

Practically the only interference of Preparedness with the Principle of Length comes in the bidding of hands of 3½ honour-tricks or less, containing a five-card and a four-card suit.

With ♠ A K 6 5 ♥ A 7 6 4 2 ♦ 9 3 ♣ 5 4.

If we chose automatically by length we would bid one heart. Partner may respond two clubs or two diamonds, forcing us to rebid once. If we rebid two spades we *reverse* at a higher round, and partner, even with a weak hand, must now go to *three* hearts if he prefers that suit. Deliberately, therefore, we conceal the true picture of *length* in order to avoid a more dangerously false picture of *strength*

North	South
1 ♠	2 ♣ or 2 ♦
2 ♥	

Partner may now pass or he may express a preference for spades by going back to *two* spades.

With 5-4 Distribution and only 3½ honour-tricks, choose a higher ranking four-card suit in preference to a *touching* lower ranking five-card suit.

♠ A Q J 8 ♥ A K 6 5 3 ♦ 7 2 ♣ 8 5 Bid one spade

♠ K 9 3 ♥ K Q 6 4 ♦ A J 10 8 5 ♣ 9 Bid one heart

Choose a lower ranking five-card suit when the four-card suit may be shown in the same round (when the suits are not touching), or when a reverse at a higher round, if necessary, will be warranted because of strong support for partner's suit.

♠ A J 6 5 ♥ 9 2 ♦ 7 4 ♣ A K 8 5 3 Bid one club. If partner

bids one diamond or one heart the reverse can be made at the same level—one-odd.

♠ K Q 9 7 ♥ 6 ♦ K J 10 5 4 ♣ A Q 8 Bid one diamond. Over one heart bid one spade. Over two clubs a two-spade bid is warranted by fine support for clubs.

With 4 honour-tricks or more, bid the longer suit first. Many players abuse the reverse principle, employing it to show strength at the cost of showing length. These players may bid a four-card minor suit before a five-card major, in order to make their second bid reflect their powerful high-card holding. This is entirely improper.

PARTNER'S COUNT OF LENGTH

When the opening hand reverses at a *higher* level, partner can usually expect that the first bid suit is the longer. A reverse in the same round does not necessarily indicate that the first suit is longer. The suits may be of equal length.

South	North		South	North
1 ♣	1 ♥	or	1 ♣	1 ♦
1 ♠			1 ♥	

A rebid in a *lower ranking* suit may possibly represent a longer second suit.

South	North		South	North
1 ♠	1 N T	or	1 ♥	1 ♠
2 ♥			2 ♦	

But after a reverse, the second bid suit is almost always longer than the first.

South	North		South	North
1 ♥	2 ♣	or	1 ♦	1 ♥
2 ♠			1 ♠	

South's first suit is longer than his second suit unless the second suit is an unbiddable five-card suit. (With ♠ 7 6 5 3 2 ♥ A Q ♦ A K 7 5 ♣ A Q bid one diamond; over any response rebid in spades.)

CHOICE OF FOUR-CARD SUITS

It is in the choice between four-card suits that the Principle of Preparedness has its greatest affect on the Principle

of Rank—and it is here that the problem becomes somewhat more complex. The question involved is always that of the rebid, and the choice is therefore based to a large degree on which is the weakest (usually the shortest) suit in the opening hand.

The first step therefore is to expect that response for which we are the least prepared, and select the bid that gives us the soundest rebid over this anticipated response.

4-4-3-2 DISTRIBUTION—TWO BIDDABLE SUITS

As between two *touching* four-card suits, prefer as a rule the higher ranking.[1] Spades adjoin or 'touch' hearts, hearts 'touch' diamonds, diamonds 'touch' clubs.

♠ A J 6 5 ♥ K Q J 7 ♦ K 8 3 ♣ 9 2 Bid one spade

♠ 7 3 ♥ A J 7 5 ♦ A K Q 4 ♣ J 9 3 Bid one heart

As between two non-touching four-card suits, prefer as a rule:

1. The most comfortable (round-saving).

♠ A K 8 3 ♥ 6 2 ♦ J 9 4 ♣ A Q 7 5 Bid one club

2. The prepared bid:

♠ J 6 2 ♥ A K 8 5 ♦ 7 3 ♣ A J 9 5. Bid one club. If partner responds one diamond we are prepared to rebid one heart. If partner responds one spade we rebid one no-trump.

♠ 8 3 ♥ A Q J 2 ♦ K 9 5 ♣ K Q 6 4. Bid one heart. If partner responds one spade we are prepared to rebid one no-trump or two clubs. If partner responds two diamonds we are prepared to rebid by raising diamonds.

3. When neither bid affords complete preparedness:

(*a*) The major suit when it is strong.

♠ A K Q 6 ♥ J 8 ♦ K Q 10 7 ♣ 8 5 4. Bid one spade. If

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[1] *Exception:* Weak hands including four-card club and diamond suits may be bid one club. For example: ♠ 8 6 3 ♥ 10 7 ♦ A K 7 6 ♣ A J 9 4. If partner responds one heart or one spade we rebid one no-trump. If we bid one diamond, should partner respond two clubs we are forced to raise to three clubs, a strong preferential try for three no-trump, which the weakness of the hand makes unwise.

partner responds one no-trump or two clubs we can bid two diamonds. If partner bids two hearts the rebid becomes awkward, but we can either rebid the spades, or bid two no-trump. The safer bid is probably the spade rebid.

(*b*) The minor when the major is weak.

♠ 8 3 ♥ K 10 7 5 ♦ Q 6 4 ♣ A K Q 7. Bid one club. Over a one-spade response we can bid one no-trump. Over one diamond, rebid one heart. Over one no-trump—pass.

♠ A 10 6 5 ♥ 9 6 4 ♦ A K J 10 ♣ 7 3. Bid one diamond. Over one heart rebid one spade. Over one no-trump pass. Over two clubs rebid two diamonds. (There is less danger attached to rebidding a four-card minor suit than to rebidding a major.)

4. With strength in three suits:

(*a*) Choose the prepared bid, including the possibility of two no-trump as a rebid:

♠ A J 6 5 ♥ 8 4 2 ♦ K Q 7 6 ♣ A 8. Bid one spade.

Obviously a bid of one diamond leaves only an unsound two no-trump or two-spade rebid over the possible response of two clubs. But if the response to one spade is two hearts, two no-trump may be bid.

♠ K 8 5 ♥ K J 10 7 ♦ 6 2 ♣ A K 5 3. Bid one heart.

Pass a one no-trump response; bid two no-trump if partner's response is two diamonds, and raise to two spades if partner's response is one spade.

It would be equally safe to bid one club. But if partner responds one no-trump, the hearts cannot be shown. Partner may have many hands including an unbiddable four-card heart suit with an excellent play for a heart game which can only be reached by opening with one heart. For example:

♠ Q J 6 ♥ Q 8 7 2 ♦ A 6 5 4 ♣ 9 3

The reader is urged to treat each hand of this type as a separate problem. In many cases the choice may rest between two evils—and the best that can be done is to select the lesser. As a rule, that suit is the best which is the most comfortable in later bidding—that is, which does not carry the weak hand to the dangerous level of two- or three-odd.

4-4-4-1 DISTRIBUTION

When all three suits are biddable or nearly so, the choice

is less difficult, from the standpoint of preparedness, than with two four-card suits. There is only one suit response for which we are not prepared and we need consider only the possibility of that response and a response of one no-trump.

As among three four-card biddable or nearly biddable, prefer, as a rule:

1. The highest when all suits are touching.

♠ A J 6 5 ♥ K 10 8 4 ♦ K Q J 3 ♣ 7. Bid one spade
♠ 8 ♥ K Q 6 5 ♦ A Q 7 2 ♣ K 10 6 5. Bid one heart

2. The most economical (round-saving) when the suits are not touching.

♠ A J 8 5 ♥ 6 ♦ K J 10 7 ♣ A 10 9 5. Bid one diamond.
But: (*a*) The major when both majors are strong:
♠ K Q 10 6 ♥ A J 10 7 ♦ 8 ♣ K J 6 5. Bid one spade
(*b*) The lowest when both majors are shaded:
♠ K 10 6 3 ♥ A 9 7 4 ♦ 6 ♣ A Q 10 3. Bid one club

We bid one club because if partner responds one diamond we can bid one spade, but if partner responds one no-trump we discard any game hopes and pass.

Strengthen the example hands to four honour-tricks or more and we make our choice on a different basis because we are prepared to reverse at a higher round if necessary. For example:

♠ K Q J 8 ♥ A Q 9 5 ♦ 6 ♣ K Q J 2

Again we have two strong major suits but this time we bid one club, in accordance with the Economy Principle. If partner responds one diamond, we rebid one spade; and if partner then bids two clubs, two diamonds or one no-trump, we bid two hearts, thus showing all three suits below the third round. But our great reason for this choice is that if partner bids one no-trump we can still bid two spades because the hand is strong enough to warrant forcing the bidding to a higher round.

It will be observed that the Principles of Economy and Preparedness are usually best served by the choice of that suit which is immediately below the singleton.

THE EFFECT ON BIDDABLE SUITS

Sometimes the one biddable suit in the hand offers no

possibility of a sound rebid over partner's *anticipated* one-round forcing response. This has given birth to the much-abused three-card minor suit bid. Experts fall back on this bid of a three-card minor only when it is absolutely essential; properly, they treat it as a necessary evil.

Many hands that are too strong to pass would be too weak to rebid if the normal opening bid—based on biddable suit requirements—were made. Other hands contain no properly biddable suit, do not meet the requirements for one no-trump, and yet are much too strong to pass.

In some of these hands the problem may be solved by bidding a shaded four-card suit; in others, bidding a three-card minor suit is the only remedy.

The use of such a three-card suit is a 'prepared' bid and should not be confused with the artificial club and diamond bids used in some systems to denote powerful hands and in others to denote sub-minimum protective third- or fourth-hand bids. Such bids are definitely losing bids, and systems based on them are unsound. They waste, needlessly, the most precious commodity in Bridge—bidding rounds or *time*. They confuse the partner while opening the door to the opponents for low, cheap overcalls. There are no artificial opening bids in the Culbertson System. We do not *distort* the first bid to picture, by that one call, the general strength of the hand.[1] We modify the first bid only so that later bids will *not* distort the picture of the hand's true strength.

THREE-CARD SUIT BIDS

There are two sound reasons for the choice of the three-card minor as the 'prepared bid'. First: minor-suit openings offer partner easy opportunity to respond—and opening bidder opportunity to rebid—*at the one level!* Second: partner is hardly likely to carry a minor suit to five-odd without at least five good trumps—in which case the suit is safely playable.

In order to assure this parallel—as well as to be prepared for a possible opening lead in the suit bid—we set the biddable requirements for the short minor suit as three to the

[1] The opening two-bid can hardly be considered artificial or distorted since it always shows the best suit.

Ace, King, or Queen-ten. (A x x, K x x, or Q 10 x.)

4-4-3-2 AND 4-3-3-3 MINIMUMS

The choice of the three-card suit is the only choice affected by the opening bidder's position at the table. Third or fourth hand, the use of the three-card suit is confined exclusively to those hands with no biddable suit and insufficient strength or incorrect distribution for opening with one no-trump. Here there is no need for preparing the rebid, since partner's initial pass has removed the forcing character of the suit take-out.

Therefore, although there is no difference in the *strength* required for the opening bid first, second, third, or fourth hand, there may be a difference in the *choice* of what that bid should be when partner has not yet passed (first or second hand), and when partner has already passed (third and fourth hand).

The correct bidding of the following example hands is given for first and second hand, as well as third and fourth:

Opening Bid, Holding:				*First or Second*	Third or *Fourth*
♠ A Q 6 3	♥ 8 7 5	♦ A 5 4	♣ K 8 6	1 ♣	1 ♠
♠ Q 9 5	♥ K J 6 3	♦ 8 5 4	♣ A K 8	1 ♣	1 ♥
♠ A 7 5 2	♥ K J 6	♦ A K 7	♣ J 5 3	1 ♦	1 ♦

CHAPTER XII

FORCING BIDS

The object of a forcing bid is to keep the bidding low, in order to select the best contract for the combined hands, and yet to make sure that the bidding is kept open in case it is desirable to reach a game or higher contract. The word 'forcing' means just what it says. There is no such thing as 'a forcing bid which may be passed'.

A forcing bid is either *forcing to game* or *forcing for one round*.

BIDS WHICH ARE FORCING TO GAME

When a bid is forcing to game it imposes simultaneously an obligation on both partners, the one who forces and the one who is forced. A 'forcing situation' exists and both partners are supposed to continue the bidding until a game is reached or the opponents are doubled for penalties. Neither partner may pass unless an opponent bids, thus assuring the other partner another chance.

A bid of exactly one more trick than is necessary, whether an opening bid, a raise, or a rebid, and whether in a suit or in no-trump, is, with rare exceptions, forcing to game.

Thus, if I bid two spades as an opening bid I have created a forcing situation and a game must be reached. If I bid one spade and my partner bids three spades, or three clubs, or two no-trump, each of which is exactly one trick more than necessary, he has created a forcing situation and I must respond now and later until a game is reached.

The exceptions to this general rule are few in number and of slight importance. Some jump bids, it is true, are not actually forcing to game, but they still show such strong hands that they may be treated almost as though they were game forces. These exceptions are:

1. An opening bid of two no-trump, or a jump rebid of two no-trump by either partner.

For example:

South, the dealer, bids two no-trump. It is not forcing; his partner may pass holding less than ½ honour-trick.

The jump rebid of two no-trump is not forcing in either of the two instances:

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 N T			

or

1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠	Pass	2 N T	

However, these are very strong bids and may be passed only when holding much less than partner should expect from the previous bidding.

2. When a player *has passed originally*, and then responds to his partner's opening suit bid with a double raise or a two no-trump take-out, it is not forcing.

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
3 ♥			

or

Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
2 N T			

North can pass, but only if he had no genuine opening bid. If he had a real bid he should now bid again.

3. When the opening hand makes a jump rebid in the same suit he bid at first, or gives a double raise in the responder's suit, it is not forcing.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 N T	Pass
3 ♥			

or

1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♠			

North may pass these bids only if he has less than 1-plus honour-trick and no distributional strength. Provided North has not made a super-shaded response on the first round, these bids are in effect forcing bids.

4. When partner passes the opening bid, a jump rebid in a new suit is not entirely forcing.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	2 ♣	Pass	Pass
3 ♦			

North may pass, but should raise with some distributional support for either of South's suits, even without an honour-trick in his hand.

This analysis makes it clear that any jump bid is either unconditionally forcing to game[1] or is so strong that little could be lost if partner treated it as a forcing bid.

BIDS WHICH ARE FORCING FOR ONE ROUND

Some bids are forcing for one round only—that is, the player who forces demands one more chance to bid. He does not demand that a game contract be reached, but the necessity to respond once is just as great. The principal differences between these and game-forcing bids are:

(*a*) The partner, after making sure that the bidding is kept open once, may pass thereafter unless a new forcing bid is made.

(*b*) The player who makes the one-round forcing bid does not obligate *himself* in any way. Even when he is given his chance to rebid, he is at liberty to pass.

Any bid in a suit not previously bid is forcing for one round.

This does not, however, include opening suit-bids of one, and the following situations furnish further exceptions:

1. A *rebid* by either partner at the level of two in a suit is not forcing.

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥ (not forcing)			

or

1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 N T	Pass	2 ♦ (not forcing)	

The rebid of two hearts in the first case, and of two diamonds in the second case, is not forcing.

[1] See also page 192 for a jump suit-bid over opponent's take-out double.

2. A take-out of an opening suit-bid in a new suit is not forcing when made by a player who has passed originally.

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
2 ♦ (not forcing)			

or

Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 ♠ (not forcing)			

South has in each case shown by passing at first that he has less than the strength needed for an opening bid. In view of this fact, North may decide that game is impossible and may pass the response.

3. A suit take-out of an opening no-trump bid is not forcing.

South	West	North	East
1 N T	Pass	2 ♥	

Far from being forcing, this take-out shows a hand too weak for a raise.

OTHER FORCING BIDS

Apart from the jump bids which are forcing to game and the non-jump suit-bids which are forcing for one round, the side that opens the bidding may employ the following forcing bids:

1. A bid of *four* or *five* no-trump, which is a special slam-bidding convention and is discussed in the chapters on slam bidding.

2. A take-out of partner's opening suit-bid with one no-trump, when there is a part-score of 30, 40 or 50.

This is essentially a trap bid. The opponents are very anxious to defend against a part-score, and if the responder keeps the bidding low with a one-no-trump take-out, the opponents will be tempted to overcall with a two-bid, at which contract they may be doubled and defeated badly.

3. A bid in a suit previously bid by the opponents is forcing. It usually shows first-round control (Ace or a void) in the opponents' suit, as well as other strength, and is about the same as a forcing take-out. It is a mild slam try.

4. In general, if a player responds to one of the jump bids which are nearly forcing bids (page 144) he has accepted the invitation to bid game; and if a game is not yet reached by his response it is expected that both partners will continue the bidding.

THE DEFENDERS' FORCING BIDS

The rules of forcing bids described in this chapter have applied only to the side which opened the bidding. The defenders, because they enter the bidding when it has already been opened, face a different problem. At least one of their opponents, who has made an opening bid, probably has about three honour-tricks. Against such a strong hand it is not often that a player may be sure of game. The procedure of the defenders is therefore to show strength by about the same sort of forcing bids that the opening side used but not to make them entirely forcing—to leave partner the option of passing.

A defender's jump overcall, when exactly one more than necessary, is a strength-showing bid but may be passed.

A jump take-out of a simple overcall, when made in a new suit, is a strong bid that is absolutely forcing for one round. The original overcaller must rebid his suit, raise, or bid an appropriate number of no-trump. For example:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	1 ♦	Pass	2 ♠

East's bid tells West that game is in sight unless his one diamond overcall was an absolute minimum. The two spade bid is forcing for only one round and this will give East the opportunity to determine whether or not a game contract should finally be reached. West, for example, may be able to bid three spades, and then East will probably go to four. If West can do no more than bid three

diamonds or two no-trump, however, East may bid only three spades and then West is relieved of further bidding.

The following bids by the defenders are, however, definitely forcing and cannot be passed short of game:

1. An immediate overcall in the opponents' bid suit. The word 'immediate' means that the defender must overcall the opponents' suit at his first opportunity:

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	2 ♥
	or		
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♠	2 ♠ or 2 ♣

In either case East's bid is forcing to game, and shows a void or the Ace in the opponent's suit.

2. A jump bid in a new suit by a player who has previously made a take-out double:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Double	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	3 ♣ (forcing to game)		

3. An overcall of an opponent's opening four- or five-bid with four or five no-trump.

These and other defenders' bids are discussed in Chapters XXI to XXIII.

SUMMARY OF FORCING SITUATIONS

BIDS WHICH ARE FORCING TO GAME

South	West	North	East	
2 ♦				Any opening two-bid.
South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♠		Jump take-out in a suit.
	or			
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♦		
South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	2 N T		Jump two no-trump take-out.
South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥		Double raise.
	but not			
1 ♥	Double	3 ♥ (pre-emptive)		

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♠		Any bid in the opponents' suit.
		or		
1 ♥	1 ♠	3 ♣	Pass	
4 ♣	Pass	4 ♥	Pass	
4 ♠				

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 N T	Pass	Jump rebid in a new suit after partner has responded.
3 ♦				

BY THE DEFENDERS

South	West	North	East	
4 ♠	4 N T			Four- or five-no-trump overcall of opponents' pre-emptive bid.
		or		
5 ♦	5 N T			

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Double	2 ♥	Pass	A jump rebid in a new suit after a take-out double.
Pass	3 ♠			
		or		
1 ♥	Double	Pass	2 ♦	
Pass	3 ♠			

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	2 ♥			Immediate overcall in the opponents' suit.
1 ♦	1 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Jump take-out of overcall—forcing for one round.

BIDS WHICH ARE FORCING FOR ONE ROUND

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠		Take-out of an opening suit-bid with one of a higher-ranking or two of a lower-ranking suit.
		or		
1 ♥	2 ♣	2 ♦		

South	West	North	East	
1 ♣	Pass	1 ♦	Pass	A rebid in a new suit at the level of one.
1 ♥				

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass	A rebid in a new suit at the level of three or higher, except when enough for game.
3 ♣				
	or			
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	
3 ♥	Pass	4 ♣		

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass	Any conventional four- or five-no-trump bid.
4 N T	Pass	5 N T		

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass	Any bid in a new suit when game has been reached.
4 ♥	Pass	4 ♠		

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Double	2 ♠		A jump bid in a new suit over opponents' take-out double.

With a part-score, certain otherwise game-forcing bids become only one-round forcing (page 196).

With a part-score of not more than 50, a one-no-trump response to an opening bid is forcing for one round.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 N T	

Certain other bidding situations, though not defined as forcing, are, in effect, forcing for one round unless game is already reached.

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass	A bid in a new suit when partner has raised the first suit.
2 ♠				

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	A bid in any suit or a return to partner's suit when partner's opening bid or rebid is two no-trump Only exception: the *Sign-off* (page 194).
2 N T	Pass	3 ♠		
	or			
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	
2 N T	Pass	3 ♥		
	or			
2 N T	Pass	3 ♣		

South	West	North	East	
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦	Pass	After a game has been reached, any suit-bid which makes contract still short of game.
3 N T	Pass	4 ♦		

See also The Forcing Pass, Chapter XXXIII.

BIDS WHICH ARE STRENGTH-SHOWING BUT NOT FORCING

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 N T	Pass	A jump rebid in the same suit.
3 ♥				
	or			
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	
1 N T	Pass	3 ♠		

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	A jump raise of partner's take-out.
3 ♠				

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	A jump two-no-trump rebid by the opening bidder.
2 N T				

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Double	Pass	1 ♠	A jump raise of partner's response to a take-out double.
Pass	3 ♠			

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Jump rebid in a new suit after partner passes opening bid.
3 ♣				

South	West	North	East	
2 N T				Opening bids of two-no-trump or higher.

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	3 N T		Jump no-trump responses that are at game.

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	Jump preference raise of partner's suit.
2 ♦	Pass	3 ♥		

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Double	Pass	2 ♠	Jump responses to take-out doubles.

South	West	North	East	
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Pass	Jump raises and no-trump take-outs; or non-jump suit take-outs, when made by a player who has previously passed.
3 ♥				
	or			
Pass	Pass	1 ♥	Pass	
2 N T				
	or			
Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	
2 ♥				

CHAPTER XIII

OPENING SUIT-BIDS OF TWO

An opening bid of two in a suit is forcing to game, requiring partner to respond even with the weakest conceivable hand, and making it obligatory for both partners to continue the bidding until a game is reached or until a satisfactory penalty double of opponents is made.

Hands containing five honour-tricks or less will not, as a rule, score game unless partner holds at least one honour-trick in addition. With one honour-trick he will respond to an opening one-bid, so that a two-bid with such hands is a losing bid, suffering a penalty when partner has nothing, and showing no gain when partner would have been able to respond to a one-bid.

Some hands containing only three or four honour-tricks will produce game unassisted because of powerful distribution. These are freaks, and because 5 honour-tricks or so are divided among the other players' hands, partner or an opponent will probably overcall, giving the opener another chance. Freaks which include solid suits are taken care of by the three-bid. Only a few freaks containing 4½ honour-tricks call for forcing bids.

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS OF TWO-BIDS

An opening two-bid should seldom be even considered unless the hand contains more than 5 honour-tricks distributed among three suits and is not more than 1 trick short of a certain game even with a blank in partner's hand. Experts who require that a two-bid absolutely guarantee a game place the requirement so high as practically to drive the two-bid out of circulation. It is better to lose, very rarely, by making a two-bid than to miss splendid opportunities for more precise slam bidding, not to speak of the numerous games retrieved. With a count of five or more honour-tricks the player should consider the following essential qualities of the hand:

1. *Length and strength of the trump suit.* A four-card trump suit does not call for a two-bid without 6 honour-tricks, sometimes 5½ with a 4-4-4-1 hand pattern.

2. *Playing strength and possible support for a long weak suit in partner's hand.* The two-bid is a valuable *approach* bid to seek the best suit, with hands distributed 5-4-3-1 and containing one strong suit (five cards); a second biddable suit (four cards) and three-card support such as A Q x, A J x, K Q x, etc., for a long weak suit partner *may* have.

3. *Control in all suits.* The opening two-bid, by its very nature, invites a slam if partner has a few odd honour-cards and if a suit fit is found. Losing slams will be avoided if borderline two-bids are not bid on hands containing a worthless suit such as x x x. A weak doubleton (less than Q x) should be a deterrent in close cases.

4. *Safety,* if partner should have no support in either honours or distribution. The hand which justifies a forcing two-bid should, unaided, be reasonably sure of winning within one trick of the expected final contract (eight sure winners if able to stop at three no-trump; nine sure winners if necessary to go on to game in a suit).

5. *Possibility of finding a more informative bid.* Hands distributed 4-3-3-3 and strong enough for a two-bid often can be better shown and can elicit more informative responses from partner if opened with a high no-trump bid (Chapter XXVII).

THE TWO-BID RULE

When the hand conforms to the general specifications of a forcing two-bid:

Count your honour-tricks.

Count your losing tricks—cards which you expect some other player to win.

Bid two in your longest biddable suit if your hand contains more honour-tricks than losers.

For example, a player holds

♠ A Q J 10 9 ♥ A Q J ♦ K Q J ♣ 7 2

He counts about five honour-tricks, including plus values, and he has a strong trump suit. He therefore counts his losers: The King

of spades, the King of hearts, the Ace of diamonds and the two little clubs, five in all. He has only five honour-tricks. Not having more honour-tricks than losers, he bids only one spade.

The two-bid formula[1] will prove to be a great help when deciding on a two-bid.

Most hands which approach the two-bid range are so strong that the few losers are readily apparent. In the example given above, it was easy to pick out the losers.

With a hand like ♠ K Q J 10 6 5 ♥ A ♦ A K Q 3 ♣ K 6, you can see at once that you must lose one spade trick, no heart trick, perhaps a trick in diamonds (therefore ½ trick) and at least one, probably two club tricks if partner has no entry. Total 3½ or 4 losers; honour-tricks, 5-plus; result: bid two spades.

Players not experienced in the play of the cards, who can visualize their expected losers only with difficulty, will arrive at the same results by totalling their winners and subtracting from 13, the difference being the number of losers. The rules given in Chapter IV should be slightly altered in counting for two-bids:

(*a*) Count all suit-lengths as though they were side suits—2 for a six-card suit, 1 for a five-card suit, ½ for a four-card suit, etc., whether you are counting the expected trump suit or a side suit.

(*b*) Count honours and solid suits at their full value, except that all finesses against Kings must be counted as lost. An A Q combination must be valued as one winner, not 1½, for you cannot be sure of an entry to dummy to finesse. A guarded King should not be completely discounted, however, since if partner holds the Queen of the suit it will win a trick.

Illustrating the count of honour-tricks and losers:

Honour-tricks		*Honour-winners*	*Long cards*
1	♠ A Q 10	1½	
1½+	♥ K Q J 7 6	2	1
2+	♦ A K Q	3	
½	♣ K 2	½	
5½		7	1

[1] This formula is the result of original research by Hy. Lavinthal, whose suggestion was tested and modified to its present form by my associates and myself.

The hand has 8 winners, which leaves 5 losers.
Having more honour-tricks than losers ($5\frac{1}{2}$ to 5), bid two hearts.

Honour-tricks		*Honour-winners*	*Long cards*
$1\frac{1}{2}$	♠ A Q 7 3	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
2	♥ A K 6	2	
$1\frac{1}{2}$	♦ A Q 5 4	$1\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$
1	♣ A 7	1	
6		6	1

Having only as many honour-tricks as losers, you cannot make a forcing two-bid, but must bid one spade or two no-trump.

TWO-BIDS ON FREAKS

The honour-trick minimum for a forcing two-bid drops below five only in the case of freak long suits or freak two-suiters.

Distribution such as 5-5-2-1 is *not* a 'freak' but the common garden variety of two-suiter. To justify a two-bid with $4\frac{1}{2}$ honour-tricks, the two-suiter's distribution must be 6-6-1-0, 7-5-1-0, and only in rare cases of solid suits do 6-5-1-1 or 6-5-2-0 hands get by. Only a long suit of seven or eight cards justifies a two-bid with only four honour-tricks.

Whether freak or not, all two-bids must conform to the formula: more honour-tricks than losers.

The following hands are sound forcing two-spade bids:

1. ♠ A K 10 9 7 6 4 3 ♥ A Q J ♦ K 6 ♣ —
2. ♠ A K 10 8 7 6 3 ♥ K Q J ♦ A 6 ♣ 2
3. ♠ A K Q 7 6 ♥ 6 ♦ K Q J 10 ♣ A Q J
4. ♠ A Q J 7 6 5 ♥ A K 6 ♦ K Q ♣ A 7
5. ♠ A Q J 6 2 ♥ A K 6 3 ♦ K Q 6 ♣ A
6. ♠ K Q J 6 3 ♥ A K Q 8 ♦ A 7 ♣ A 2
7. ♠ A K J 6 4 ♥ A K 6 ♦ A K 9 ♣ 7 4
8. ♠ A K J 6 ♥ A Q J 6 ♦ K Q 10 7 ♣ A
9. ♠ K Q J 6 ♥ A Q 10 9 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ A K
10. ♠ A K Q 7 6 5 ♥ A K Q 6 4 2 ♦ 7 ♣ —

The following hands, despite their honour-trick strength, are not opening two-bids:

1. ♠ A K 6 5 3 ♥ A K 7 ♦ A K 8 ♣ 6 2
2. ♠ A K 10 9 7 ♥ A K 6 5 ♦ A 5 ♣ 7 2
3. ♠ A K 6 3 ♥ A K 7 4 ♦ K Q 6 2 ♣ 9
4. ♠ A K 10 7 5 ♥ A K 7 6 2 ♦ 5 ♣ A 6
5. ♠ A K 9 8 6 5 3 ♥ A Q 6 ♦ K J 9 ♣ —

RESPONSES TO FORCING TWO-BIDS

The success of the forcing two-bid depends largely upon correct responses. The responses to a forcing two-bid are:

Pass—barred in all situations; except when the intervening opponent overcalls, in which case the pass is proper if holding less than 1 honour-trick.

If the bidding is:

South	West	North	East
2 ♥	2 ♠	2 N T	

North, for his free two-no-trump response, must have about 1-plus or 1½ honour-tricks including a spade stopper:

♠ K 10 6 ♥ 9 5 ♦ Q 6 4 2 ♣ Q 10 5 3

With a weaker hand, North could pass, for South is already assured another chance to bid.

The fact that, owing to an opponent's overcall, the responder may and does pass on the first round, in no way relieves either the opener or the responder from the obligation subsequently to keep the bidding open until game or its penalty equivalent is reached.

Two no-trump—a blanket minimum response denoting a hand which contains less than 1 honour-trick; or, if the hand does have 1 honour-trick, is not suitable to a raise or suit take-out.

Regardless of the fact that responder may hold a long and fairly strong suit such as Q J 10 8 7 6 5, he must deny honour-tricks by first bidding two no-trump, and may then show his suit at his next opportunity.

Three no-trump—a hand containing 1½ honour-tricks but no biddable suit or trump support. The 1½ honour-tricks may be in one suit as (A Q x) or divided among two or more suits.

Four no-trump shows at least 2½ honour-tricks, and *five no-trump* 3 honour-tricks including at least one Ace. These bids should be avoided as immediate responses, since they prevent an exchange of information and make slam bidding much more difficult.

A four or five no-trump bid by the responder carries the same meaning whether bid immediately or subsequently, unless bid as a response to a conventional four no-trump bid; and also unless the responder has by a two no-trump response previously denied so great an honour-trick holding.

A single raise shows adequate trump support with at least 1 honour-trick in the hand. Even when holding particularly great trump support and more than 1 honour-trick, the responder should give only one raise on the first round. Holding more than the strength required for a raise, and also holding a biddable suit, it is better to bid the suit and raise later; but with a biddable suit and a minimum raise, the raise should be preferred in order to 'set' the trump suit.

A double raise (from two to four) has a special meaning. Responder should give a double raise only when holding five trumps, or four trumps to the Queen; *he must not have a singleton or any honour higher than a Queen in his hand.* This is a neat little inference enabling the opener to stop dead in his tracks short of a dangerous slam, or, if strong enough, to make an asking bid which asks immediately about *third-round* control.

A suit take-out is made on any biddable suit, provided the hand contains:

1½ honour-tricks with any biddable suit;

1-plus honour-trick with any biddable suit headed by Ace, King, or QJ;

1 honour-trick with any five-card biddable suit headed by Ace, King or QJ.

The following are typical responses to partner's opening bid of two hearts (forcing to game):

1. ♠ 6 5 2 ♥ 7 3 ♦ 8 6 5 4 ♣ 9 5 3 2 —two no-trump
2. ♠ A 6 5 ♥ 4 2 ♦ 8 6 5 4 ♣ 8 6 5 3 —two no-trump
3. ♠ K 6 2 ♥ 8 3 ♦ 8 7 6 4 2 ♣ A 7 4 —three no-trump
4. ♠ 8 6 ♥ 5 3 2 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ 10 9 8 6 2—three no-trump

5. ♠ 8 7 ♥ Q 6 3 ♦ K 9 6 4 ♣ 8 6 4 3 —three hearts
6. ♠ 8 ♥ 10 9 7 6 ♦ A 8 6 2 ♣ K 8 5 3 —three hearts
7. ♠ 6 2 ♥ J 8 7 5 3 ♦ 10 7 6 ♣ 8 4 2 —four hearts
8. ♠ A Q 6 5 ♥ 9 6 ♦ J 8 7 4 ♣ 8 3 2 —two spades
9. ♠ A 7 ♥ K 7 ♦ Q 9 6 4 3 2 ♣ 8 3 2 —three diamonds
10. ♠ K 6 ♥ 8 5 4 ♦ Q 8 6 4 2 ♣ 10 7 3 —two no-trump
11. ♠ 6 5 ♥ 8 6 2 ♦ A J 6 3 ♣ Q 8 5 2 —three diamonds
12. ♠ 6 3 2 ♥ Q 8 7 5 ♦ 4 3 ♣ Q 6 5 2 —four hearts

See also 'part-score bidding' in Chapter XVIII. A forcing two-bid is forcing even when it is enough for game.

CHAPTER XIV

OPENING SUIT-BIDS OF THREE[1]

Suppose you hold:

♠ A K Q J 10 5 2 ♥ 6 3 ♦ 8 5 2 ♣ 7

No matter what you bid, no matter how you bid, your partner will never believe, short of kicking him on the shin, that you really have a ready-made suit. And because he will never believe you, he will either keep on pushing his suit across your way or he will drop you at the very first opportunity with a sigh of relief.

This family of ready-made suits is of extreme importance, constituting a large part of the swing hands. It is almost futile with such hands to start the bidding with a suit-bid of one and then try to build up inferences. The more you bid your suit the more scared your partner becomes. For this reason to attain the utmost in scientific bidding it is necessary to reserve the level of the opening three-bid for the ready-made or nearly solid suits, regardless of whether the hand contains outside honour strength or not. Partner is then enabled to recognize unmistakably a suit that absolutely needs no help, and can concentrate his attention on

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[1] One of the few significant changes in the Culbertson System is in respect to the opening three-bid and its responses. Heretofore an opening three-bid has been a 'two-way' bid, although the title Two-way Three-bid was dropped in the last edition of this book. That is to say, the three-bid could be either a strong or a weak bid as long as the 'solid suit principle' was observed.

The philosophy and purpose of the two-way three-bid were inextricably tied up to the beautiful but rarely used asking bids. When these latter were demoted from their official place in the Culbertson System to the 'optional' department, I realized that the two-way three-bid would have to be simplified. The new three-bid is much simpler and more effective.

The fundamental principle of the ready-made suit has, however, been retained.

defence (if the hand contains nothing but the long trump suit) or attack (if the hand contains outside honour strength).

An important point to realize is that although the bidding starts at the level of three, it generally saves at least one extra round of bidding by eliminating the necessity of numerous trump rebids to assert (and deny), affirm (deny again), confirm (deny once more) and reaffirm the trump suit. It follows that actually the opening three-bid is a three-way bid: It is a shut-out bid; it is a trap bid; and, what is even more important, it is a special bid to advertise a suit which from the go is all set.

A sharp divergence must be observed in the treatment of minor and major suit three-bids. A hand containing six or seven solid diamonds or clubs may be extremely valuable for no-trump purposes, but is of doubtful value if eleven tricks at a minor suit contract will be required. Hence to bid three diamonds on such a hand as

♠ 6 2 ♥ 7 ♦ A K Q 10 8 4 2 ♣ 6 5 3

is to make matters beautifully simple for partner, who may hold very little but stoppers in the other three suits. In this case the diamond hand will produce seven tricks, but the same cannot be said of such a holding as

♠ A 2 ♥ 6 3 ♦ K Q J 10 9 8 6 ♣ 6 2

With this hand no-trump is a dangerous gamble unless partner holds the ace and another diamond. The spade ace may be knocked out early in the play and the beautiful diamond suit may take precisely no tricks. Thus, in theory at least, the new three-bid in a minor suit being aimed directly at a three no-trump contract, must contain a suit with no probable loser. And, so that slam bidding shall not be made too difficult (perhaps impossible) the hand must not contain more than one-plus honour-trick outside of the trump suit itself.

In major suits, since three no-trump is not the prime objective, the trump suit may contain one loser, although of course absolutely solid suits are even better for three-bid purposes. If the major suit holder perceives any danger in a three no-trump contract, he always can go to four of his suit.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A MINOR SUIT THREE-BID

The requirements for an opening minor suit three-bid are:

1. A solid six- or seven-card suit. Examples:

   A K Q J 5 4 A K Q 7 5 4 2

2. No more than one-plus honour-trick outside of the trump suit.
3. A maximum of 7½ winners in the hand.

NOTE. The factor of vulnerability must of course determine the lower limits of a three-bid, though it does not affect the maximum of 7½ winners. A hand with six solid diamonds or clubs and nothing on the side constitutes a good opening three-bid when not vulnerable. Under most conditions, when vulnerable, there should be another ½ to one winner. But particularly third hand, the Rule of Two and Three may be abrogated and an opening three-bid made with only six sure winners.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A MAJOR SUIT THREE-BID

1. A solid, or within one trick of solid, six-, seven- or eight-card suit. Examples:

A K Q 6 5 3 2 K Q J 10 8 7 A Q J 10 6 3 2 A K 10 9 7 5 4 2

2. No more than one-plus honour-trick outside of the trump suit.
3. A maximum of 7½ winners in the hand.

NOTE. Eight-card major suits are included in the above requirements, but since a 7½ winner maximum should be observe, it follows, of course, that eight-card suits should usually contain one loser.

REFINEMENTS

As a rule, no hand which includes a ready-made suit and which meets the stipulated requirements should be opened with a bid of one, but there are some logical exceptions to this principle. Suppose a hand contains a six-card solid minor suit and four cards (or more) in a major suit—something like

♠ J 10 8 5 ♥ 2 ♦ A K Q J 7 4 ♣ 6 3

With this holding, a bid of one diamond is logical on the mere chance that partner may be able to respond in spades.

RESPONSES TO OPENING THREE-BIDS

When partner has opened with three diamonds or three clubs, the responder should bear in mind that the opening bid was aimed primarily at a three no-trump contract. Hence responder must bid past the three no-trump level only with the greatest caution. The definite limits (6 to 7½ winners) announced by the three-bid make it possible to respond with precision via the case method. That is, if the opening bid was three diamonds and responder has one diamond in his hand, he knows he can count on at least six solid tricks opposite him. If he himself can *stop* the other three suits, a nine-trick game contract in no-trump becomes supremely logical. At the same time, the responder can gauge the *defensive* qualities of the combined hands to a nicety and accordingly can double, or fail to double, opponents' overcalls with a clear insight to the situation.

In responding, it must be borne in mind that there is a vast difference between answering an opening three diamond bid with three spades and answering it with four clubs. The former does not get past the three level and three no-trump is still available. The latter commits the partnership to a minor suit game contract.

THE PASS

With any hand containing less than 1½ honour-tricks, or less than 3½ winners for a minor suit three-bid, 2½ winners for a major suit three-bid, responder should pass. Example:

West	East
♠ A K Q 9 7 6 4	♠ 8 5
♥ 6 3	♥ J 8 7 4
♦ Q 6 2	♦ 8 5 4 3
♣ 8	♣ K 6 2

West opens with three spades; East passes.

THE RAISE

To raise a minor suit opening three-bid, responder should have at least 3½ winners which may be either distributional winners or honour winners. With this minimum number, a raise is not proper unless responder's hand is unsuitable for a three no-trump or a higher ranking suit take-out. Examples:

Raise partner's opening three diamond bid to four diamonds, holding:

♠ 6 ♥ Q 3 ♦ 8 5 4 2 ♣ A 10 8 7 4 3

If partner's three diamond bid contained only six winners, it is true that even a four diamond contract might meet defeat. This, however, is well compensated by the fact that in that case the opponents almost surely can make four spades or four hearts. If partner's three-bid was a maximum of 7½ winners, and the two hands fit well, a game in diamonds may be a laydown.

To raise a major suit three-bid, responder should have at least 2½ winners, distributional or top trick. Partner having opened with three hearts, raise to four holding:

♠ 7 5 4 2 ♥ K 8 3 ♦ K 9 7 4 3 ♣ 2
or ♠ 7 5 4 2 ♥ 8 5 3 2 ♦ J 7 6 4 3 ♣ —

THREE NO-TRUMP RESPONSE

With no raise or proper suit take-out (see next page) but with 1½ to 3 honour-tricks in at least two suits, responder should bid three no-trump. He must, of course, have at least one card in his partner's suit to make this response, for otherwise he will probably not be able to reach the 6 to 7½ winners across the table.

Example. The opening bid having been three of any suit, responder should bid three no-trump, holding:

♠ A 6 2 ♥ K 5 3 ♦ 10 7 4 ♣ 9 6 3 2

With any less, responder should pass. If the opening bid was, for example, three spades, responder also should bid three no-trump, holding as good as

♠ 8 4 2 ♥ A Q 8 ♦ A 6 3 ♣ Q 10 5 4

SUIT TAKE-OUTS

1. Take out partner's minor suit three-bid with a strong rebiddable five-card or longer major suit and about two honour-tricks in the hand. Thus, opener having bid three diamonds, responder should bid three spades, holding:

♠ A K 8 6 5 2 ♥ 7 4 ♦ 6 5 3 ♣ 7 4
or ♠ A 10 9 8 5 3 ♥ K J 7 3 ♦ 6 ♣ 5 4

Holding something like

♠ K Q 8 7 5 3 ♥ Q 9 4 2 ♦ 5 ♣ 7 3

the best response is a pass—unless a miraculous 'fit' happens to be present there is very little chance for game.

2. Take out partner's bid of three in a major into four of a lower ranking suit only if holding at least three honour-tricks including two of the three top honours in the take-out suit. Even with these requirements, great caution must be exercised in taking out an opening three-bid to four of a lower ranking suit. The responder must remember that this action rules out three no-trump as a final contract and must guide himself accordingly. Suppose, for example, that the opener bids three diamonds and responder holds:

♠ 7 6 2 ♥ A Q 3 ♦ 7 5 ♣ A Q 9 7 5

Technically, responder has the three honour-tricks and the two top honours in the club suit for a take-out to four clubs. Whether he would be *wise* to avail himself of this privilege is quite another matter however. Remember, the opening three diamond bid promised no more than 7½ winners, and, especially if not vulnerable, might well have been based on only six winners. Even if the heart and club major ten-aces produced two winners each, there is no assurance that the combined hands will 'reach' to eleven tricks. Hence, three no-trump is a better response with this hand than four clubs would be. If the opening bid was three spades instead of three diamonds, responder would be well justified in bidding four clubs, holding this hand. But he must beware of minor suit contracts.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *Any take-out of an opening three-bid (except to three no-trump) is absolutely forcing for one round.*

RESPONDING WITH FOUR NO-TRUMP

With a very strong hand, including the conventional requirements, responder should take out an opening three-bid to four no-trump. Obviously, a bare two aces and a king of a bid suit (responder might have the king if the opening bid was a major) will not justify a four no-trump response. In addition, responder must have sufficient winners to make a contract at the five-level safe.

Example: Opening bid was three spades. Responder holds:

♠ K 8 4 2 ♥ A K 8 5 2 ♦ A Q 3 ♣ 7

Four no-trump is the proper response with this hand and should be treated as a conventional four no-trump bid.

RAISES AND TAKE-OUTS ILLUSTRATED

Opening bid, three hearts:

♠ J 8 4 3 ♥ 10 6 5 2 ♦ K 9 6 5 ♣ 4
Raise to four hearts.

♠ A Q 4 ♥ 7 6 5 ♦ 8 4 ♣ 9 6 5 3 2
Raise to four hearts.

Opening bid, three diamonds:

♠ K 10 3 ♥ Q 7 5 2 ♦ 3 2 ♣ K J 6 4
or ♠ A 7 5 4 ♥ 7 4 3 2 ♦ 5 ♣ A 8 7 2
Bid three no-trump.

♠ K J 10 8 7 4 ♥ K 5 3 ♦ 9 2 ♣ 8 7
Bid three spades.

♠ A 4 2 ♥ A Q 8 6 4 ♦ 5 3 ♣ 9 7 4
Bid three hearts

Opening bid, three hearts:

♠ A Q 8 6 4 ♥ 5 3 ♦ K Q 6 ♣ 7 5 2
Bid three spades.

♠ K Q 8 7 5 4 ♥ 2 ♦ K 8 3 2 ♣ 6 2
Bid three spades.

♠ 7 6 5 ♥ 3 2 ♦ K Q J 8 5 ♣ A Q J
Bid four diamonds.

Opening bid, three diamonds:

♠ A J 3 ♥ K J 7 4 ♦ 5 4 2 ♣ A 7 5
Bid three no-trump.

♠ 7 5 4 3 ♥ 2 ♦ 8 6 5 3 ♣ A K Q 8
Bid four diamonds.

♠ A Q 4 ♥ A J 9 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ A K J 6
Bid six no-trump.

REBIDS BY THE OPENING HAND

When the opening three-bid has been in a minor suit and there has been a three no-trump response, the opener should in 99 cases out of 100 stand pat. He told his story in the first bid and even if the three no-trump take-out has been doubled, it is not up to the opening bidder to rescue. If the opening bid has been taken out to a higher ranking suit (as three diamonds—three spades), the opener must bear in mind that he is *forced* to rebid. Also, he knows that responder has a strong rebiddable five-card or longer suit with about two honour-tricks as a minimum. He therefore can gauge his rebid according to his own distribution and also according to whether his bid was based on the upper or lower limits of the three-bid. If, for example, an opening three diamond bid was based on

♠ 6 5 3 ♥ 7 ♦ A K Q J 6 3 2 ♣ 8 4

and the response was three spades, opener should obviously raise to four spades. If the response was three hearts, opener should carefully avoid going past the three no-trump level, by rebidding three no-trump. In this case, the three no-trump bid neither affirms nor denies possession of an outside king or ace. Opener may have had his 6 to 7½ tricks all within the one suit, or may have had as many as seven solid diamonds with an outside king. When the response to an opening three-bid has been a lower ranking suit, opener must base his rebid on the knowledge that responder is showing at least three honour-tricks including two of the three top honours in the take-out suit. Also, there is the implication that responder did not fear passing the three no-trump level. Almost always, however, in the case of a lower

ranking suit take-out, the correct action of the opener will be merely to rebid his own suit.

In the case of an opening major suit three-bid and a three no-trump response, the opener must use great discretion in passing. If his opening bid was based on

♠ A K Q J 6 5 ♥ 7 5 ♦ 7 3 2 ♣ 8 4

his proper course is to pass—he is ready to deliver six tricks to the contract. If, however, his opening three-bid was:

♠ K Q J 10 8 6 4 ♥ A 7 5 ♦ 4 2 ♣ 6

he should not pass to the three no-trump take-out. Now, his heart ace, the only sure entry to his long suit, may be removed before the spade suit is established and in that case a three no-trump contract may meet a fate worse than death. The proper course is to rebid to four spades. The same applies if the trump suit is only six long. When not vulnerable, however, and when the three no-trump contract has not been doubled, it may be the better part of strategy to permit the three no-trump contract to stand, on the theory that nine tricks *may be* available at no-trump, but that ten tricks at spades will be unattainable. If the response to an opening three-bid is four no-trump, opener should treat this response as conventional and should reply according to his own ace holding. Having bid three spades on

♠ A K Q 9 5 3 ♥ 7 5 4 ♦ A 9 2 ♣ 4

opener responds to four no-trump with five no-trump.

COMPETITIVE BIDDING AND STRATEGY

An important development of all pre-emptive situations occurs when the opponents enter the bidding. Since the three-bid in itself must be based on a long suit, there will be many occasions when there will be equally long or longer suits around the table and when the opponents will refuse to be shut out.

If partner has opened with a three-bid and the next opponent has overcalled, there is no necessity for the responding hand to bid. Hence, three no-trump over an opposing bid indicates a sure stopper in the opponents' suit and probably stoppers in the other two suits. If the responding

hand doubles the opponents' overcall, the opening bidder should in 99 cases out of 100 pass. As stated before, he has already told his story and presumably his partner is acting purely on his own values. It would be highly illogical for the opening bidder to bid three spades on, let us say, seven solid spades and not another face card, and then to become panicky because the opponents' four-bid in another suit was doubled by partner. The doubler realizes just what he may find in the opener's hand, hence is in the best possible position to size up the situation and determine what can be done in both a defensive and an offensive way.

ILLUSTRATIVE HANDS

THREE-BID—NO-TRUMP GAME

The three-bid often enables the partners to reach an easy three no-trump contract—and sometimes, as in this case, an opponent who feels 'fixed' doubles to his cost.

	♠ K Q 9 7 ♥ J 10 5 2 ♦ 4 ♣ A J 6 5	
♠ 8 6 5 ♥ 7 6 3 ♦ 10 9 5 2 ♣ 9 7 4	N W E S	♠ A 10 4 3 ♥ A Q 9 8 ♦ 3 ♣ K Q 8 3
	♠ J 2 ♥ K 4 ♦ A K Q J 8 7 6 ♣ 10 2	

Neither side vulnerable. South dealer.

South	West	North	East
3 ♦[1]	Pass	3 NT[2]	Double[3]
Pass[4]	Pass	Redouble[5]	Pass
Pass	Pass		

[1] Seven and one-half winners.

[2] A strong no-trump take-out.

[3] East has been trapped by the three-bid. He cannot know that South had more than six winners, all in diamonds, or that North

had more than 1½ honour-tricks. From East's point of view there is a splendid chance to go game in spades, hearts, or clubs.

4 South is delighted with the double.

5 North knows he can count on at least six winners in South's hand and he himself has a strong no-trump take-out. It appears an odds-on chance that his own hand will produce at least three tricks and of course South may have better than the six tricks he promised.

East-West are helpless and North must make at least four-odd against any opening.

THREE-BID—SUCCESSFUL SHUT-OUT

The great value of the three-bid as a shut-out bid is demonstrated by the following hand:

	♠ Q 7 3 ♥ Q 8 6 ♦ Q ♣ Q J 6 5 4 2	
♠ 9 6 4 ♥ K J 7 5 ♦ A 9 4 2 ♣ A 3	N W E S	♠ — ♥ A 10 4 3 2 ♦ K 10 7 6 5 3 ♣ 10 8
	♠ A K J 10 8 5 2 ♥ 9 ♦ J 8 ♣ K 9 7	

Both sides vulnerable. South dealer.

South	West	North	East
3♠[1]	Pass[2]	4♠[3]	Pass[4]
Pass	Pass		

1 South has 6½ winners and a nearly ready-made suit.

2 West is hardly in a position to take action on his poorly distributed hand.

3 North has a sound raise to four.

4 East has fine distribution—but he risks a severe penalty if he steps in at five on such broken suits.

South actually makes four spades against any defence, while East-West, if not shut out, could score game at diamonds or hearts, or a slam if the heart finesse is taken correctly.

THREE-BID—SLAM BIDDING

Because of the rigid requirements for suit take-outs, slam bids may be reached with accuracy after many three-bids. The doubt about the solidity of the trump suit is removed from the responder's mind and it is this doubt that contributes so largely to the 'missed slams' after a one-bid.

	♠ 2 ♥ A 8 4 2 ♦ A K 10 9 5 ♣ 7 4 3	
♠ 10 7 6 3 ♥ K Q J ♦ J 6 3 2 ♣ J 9	N W E S	♠ 8 4 ♥ 10 9 7 6 5 ♦ 7 ♣ K Q 10 8 5
	♠ A K Q J 9 5 ♥ 3 ♦ Q 8 4 ♣ A 6 2	

Both sides vulnerable. South dealer.

South	West	North	East
3 ♠ [1]	Pass	4 ♦ [2]	Pass
4 NT [3]	Pass	5 NT [4]	Pass
7 ♠ [5]	Pass	Pass	Pass

[1] Seven-plus winners, a solid suit, and one-plus honour-trick outside of the suit.

[2] Three honour-tricks with two of the three top honours in the take-out suit.

[3] Since South can count on a diamond suit solidity by the A K in North's hand and one other honour-trick, he knows that a slam will be a laydown. North may have the K Q of hearts, the K Q of clubs, or other combinations for his overtrick. Hence South uses the 4-5 No-trump Convention to find out certainly.

[4] The conventional five no-trump response, showing two aces.

[5] With the heart ace located in North's hand, South now can visualize thirteen tricks—six spades, one heart, five diamonds and one club.

CHAPTER XV

OPENING PRE-EMPTIVE BIDS

Opening bids of four, opening *minor-suit* bids of five, and to some extent opening bids of three, are pre-emptive or *shut-out* bids.

The purpose of such a bid is to make it difficult for the opponents to bid. If I open the bidding with 'four spades', my opponents cannot enter the bidding without going as high as four no-trump or five of a suit. They may have nearly all the honour-tricks in the pack, but with only one or two bids at their disposal they will have no *time* to exchange information. Except by blind stabbing they cannot reach a slam contract. With so few rounds of bidding available to them, they can seldom find their best trump suit, and may find themselves playing the hand at a contract of five diamonds with an unsatisfactory trump suit, when five or six could be made with hearts as trumps.

The distinguishing feature of the opening shut-out bid is its weakness in honour-tricks. Naturally, with a hand strong in honour-tricks it is unnecessary to make a high opening bid (for, with so many honour-tricks against them, the opponents probably cannot make a game); and it is further undesirable to make a high shut-out bid, because it robs *the bidder himself and his partner* of bidding time, and prevents their reaching a slam contract even if they can make one.

Another distinguishing feature of the opening pre-emptive bid is its long, powerful trump suit. With such a suit (something like Q J 10 9 7 6 5 4) the hand is obviously of little value unless that suit becomes trumps; so one might as well bid to the limit in that suit at once.

More comprehensive information on the Sacrifice Principle and the shut-out bid is given in Chapter XXIX. The reader should at this time, however, absorb these basic principles governing sacrifice bidding:

THE SAFETY FACTOR

The purpose of a shut-out bid is to prevent the opponents from reaching a game contract which, if bid in the right suit, they can probably make. It is losing strategy, however, to keep them out of a game if by doubling they can collect in undertrick penalties more than the game would be worth to them.

A game is worth to them, on the average, 500 points (see page 339 for exact value of game). Therefore, do not make a shut-out bid if there is danger of going down more than 500 points.

This brings us to the Rule of Two and Three, which is: *Have at least within two tricks of your contract if vulnerable; within three tricks of your contract if not vulnerable.*

Then you can never be set more than 500 points (two tricks vulnerable or three tricks not vulnerable). Your loss, if doubled and defeated by that amount, is only as much as you would have lost anyway if your opponents had been permitted to bid and make their game.

PRE-EMPTIVE THREE-BIDS

The opening bid of three in a suit is to some extent a shut-out bid, but as such is not very effective because it is not a high enough bid. Therefore an opening three-bid is more of a strength-showing bid, the specific strength shown being a ready-made suit. This bid is described in detail in Chapter 14.

However, the opening three-bid is not unlikely to keep the opponents out of a game they could have made (page 163).

The first consideration in the three-bid is to show the power of the trump suit, both in length and in high cards. The number of honour-tricks in the hand, though a secondary consideration, may run as high as 3½ honour-tricks (including plus values).

Any other pre-emptive bid, however, should in general not be made on a hand containing more than 2-plus honour-tricks.

OPENING FOUR-BIDS

Even though the hand has 7½ winners and 2-plus honour-tricks or less, making it appropriate (under the Rule of Two and Three) for a non-vulnerable bid of four in a suit, a three-bid should be preferred if the trump suit is of the proper type (K Q J 10 x x x, A K Q x x x x x, etc.).

An opening bid of four in a major or minor suit shows:

About eight winners if not vulnerable;

Eight *sure* winners if vulnerable;

In either case, a trump suit which will win six or more of those tricks.

An opening four-bid in a major or minor suit is the same:

♠ K J 10 9 7 6 5 3 ♥ 7 ♦ K J 10 6 ♣ —
(Bid four spades, vulnerable or not)

♠ — ♥ 7 ♦ K J 10 9 7 6 5 3 ♣ K J 10 6
(Bid four diamonds, vulnerable or not)

♠ Q J 10 8 6 5 4 2 ♥ 7 ♦ K Q 5 ♣ 9
(Bid four spades not vulnerable; but pass if vulnerable)

♠ 5 ♥ 6 5 ♦ K Q 10 9 8 6 5 4 2 ♣ 10
(Bid four diamonds, vulnerable or not)

MINOR SUIT FIVE-BIDS

An opening bid of five in a minor suit is, like the four-bid, apure shu-tou tbid. Following the Rule of Two and Three, it requires nine *sure* winners if vulnerable, and *about nine* winners if not vulnerable. However, when not vulnerable but holding eight sure winners and very freakish distribution, five in a minor suit may be bid, especially against strong opposition. The contract cannot be defeated more than 500 points, and will undoubtedly stop an opposing game.

The last example shown above, on which the recommended bid was four diamonds, could be bid 'five diamonds' with equal propriety. Also:

♠ 6 ♥ 5 ♦ K J ♣ A J 9 8 7 6 5 3 2
(Bid five clubs, vulnerable or not)

An opening five-bid in a major suit is not a shut-out bid but a slam try (Chapter XXVII).

Partner must be very cautious about raising an opening four-bid past game. He may raise a minor-suit four-bid to game with three honour or ruffing winners, but should not raise any four-bid to six unless he has six winners when not vulnerable or five winners when vulnerable, including *three Aces*. He need have only two Aces if he has the King or Queen of the trump suit and a guarded King or a singleton in the fourth suit.

THE THIRD-HAND TRAP BID

In third position, *as a rare exception*, a player may sometimes make a four-bid with as many as 4-plus honour-tricks in his hand. This is purely a trap bid and is intended to lure the opponents to overcall, whereupon they can be doubled for penalties. The great value of this trap bid is as a constant threat—the opponents will never know whether the third-hand pre-emptive bid is a strong or a weak hand. Sometimes such a trap bid may be used when fourth hand.

WINNERS AND SURE WINNERS

The reader has probably noticed that in the case of non-vulnerable bids a minimum number of 'winners' is specified, whereas when vulnerable they must be sure winners. The only difference between winners and sure winners is in guarding against an abnormally bad division of the trump suit.

When not vulnerable, the expected trump suit should be valued optimistically on the basis of one long-card winner for every card over three, which assumes a favourable break of the outstanding trumps.

When vulnerable, the intended trump suit is valued as any side suit, guarding against the danger that partner may not have any trump support and also against the danger that what trumps the opponents have will be divided unevenly.

Apart from the trump suit, the count of winners is the same as explained in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER XVI

RESPONSES TO SUIT-BIDS OF ONE

The partner of the opening bidder is called the *responder*, and his bids are called *responses*.

The obligation to respond, whenever possible, to partner's opening suit-bid of one is very strong on the responder, for two reasons:

1. The opening hand *may* be packed with honour-tricks and reinforced with one or two powerful long suits, which the opener cannot show if the bidding dies.
2. The opener has already assumed a certain measure of strength in the responding hand. It is the job of the responder to confirm this strength, and to show any additional strength he may have.

There are three kinds of strength the responder may show with his response to the opening bid:

1. Honour-tricks.
2. Trump support and distributional (ruffing and long-suit) values.
3. Expected winners in a biddable suit of his own, if it become the trump suit.

There are four kinds of responses with which the responder may show the nature of the strength he holds:

1. The Pass (denial of strength of any sort);
2. The Raise (trump support and distribution);
3. The No-trump Take-out (honour-tricks);
4. The Suit Take-out (a biddable suit of his own).

Finally, the *amount* of the strength held by the responder is generally shown by the quantity of his bid—whether he bids just as little as necessary, or jumps one trick, or jumps immediately to game.[1]

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[1] This does not mean, however, that the higher the bid the greater the strength shown, for some bids, being forcing, need not be bid to their full value at once.

THE PASS

To pass partner's opening suit-bid of one is the loudest warning in Bridge. It shows a hand *so weak* that its total strength is:

1. Less than one honour-trick;
2. Less than adequate support for partner's suit; or, if adequate support (Q x x or x x x x) is held, such poor distribution that there is little or no hope of winning a ruffing trick;
3. No higher ranking suit as good as K x x x x or Q J x x x (five cards, headed by ½ honour-trick); and probably no lower ranking suit as good as that.

Some response should be made with as much as one honour-trick; or with adequate trump support and a ruffing-trick; or with a biddable suit containing about three or four winners, depending on whether it can be shown at one-odd or two-odd. Sometimes, it is true, a pass is made on a hand containing one honour-trick, but only when it is a *bare* Ace, without an honour in some other suit, and without support for partner's suit.

The pass says, 'Partner, my hand is so weak that no matter how strong you are I do not believe we should reach a higher (game) contract; and though a better part-score contract (a better suit fit) may be found, it is too dangerous to risk adding another trick to the contract trying to find out.'

For example, holding the following hands the responder should pass his partner's opening bid of one heart:

♠ 8 4 3 ♥ K 8 5 2 ♦ 7 6 4 ♣ 10 9 7 — But change one of the plain suits to a doubleton and he should raise.

♠ 9 7 5 4 ♥ 8 7 4 ♦ J 6 ♣ K 5 3 2 — But change the ♦ Jack to the Queen and he should bid one no-trump.

♠ J 10 8 6 3 ♥ 9 4 ♦ 8 6 3 ♣ 9 7 5 — But change the ♠ Jack to the ♠ Queen and he should bid one spade.

♠ 7 5 2 ♥ 9 6 ♦ K 10 9 4 3 2 ♣ 10 7 But change a small diamond to the Queen or Jack and he should bid two diamonds.

♠ A 5 2 ♥ 7 6 ♦ 9 5 4 3 ♣ 8 7 5 2 But add any Jack and he should bid one no-trump.

THE RAISE

To raise is to increase partner's bid by one or more tricks in the same suit. There are single raises (a raise to two); double raises (a jump raise to three); and triple or game raises (a raise to four[1]).

SINGLE RAISES

Single raises are of two kinds, full and shaded. The full raise shows four winners, making the trick expectancy of the combined hands 8 tricks or more. It may often have 4½ winners and sometimes even 5, when there are not enough honour-tricks in the hand (less than 2) for a forcing double raise.

A shaded raise is given only when the intervening opponent has passed and a pass by responder may allow the bidding to be closed out before the opener has had a chance to rebid. This is a 'courtesy' raise and may conceivably be given without even a fraction of an honour-trick in the hand, and as few as two winners. The opener should generally assume that the raise was 'shaded', until the subsequent bidding gives him a chance to find out.

Whether full or shaded, every raise requires adequate trump support: Q x x or any four trumps.

The number of winners in the hand is determined by counting the values in honours, long suits and short suits (Chapter IV). For those who find it easier to look only for the honour-tricks and short suits, the following *case method* may be used:

[1] In a minor suit a raise to four is not, literally, a game raise, but conforms to the same requirements.

Raise once with adequate trump support and:
1 honour-trick with a singleton;
1½ honour-tricks with a doubleton;
2 honour-tricks if 4-3-3-3.

Give a shaded raise with adequate trump support and a singleton, even without any honour-trick; or with:
½ honour-trick and a doubleton;
1 honour-trick if 4-3-3-3.[1]

The following hands are minimum shaded raises of partner's opening one-spade bid, *only if the intervening player has passed:*

1. ♠ Q 3 2 ♥ 8 ♦ 10 8 6 5 3 ♣ 9 7 5 2
2. ♠ 8 6 5 3 ♥ 6 2 ♦ K 8 5 4 ♣ 8 5 2
3. ♠ K Q 6 5 ♥ 10 5 4 ♦ 8 6 2 ♣ 8 4 3
4. ♠ 5 4 3 2 ♥ 9 6 5 3 ♦ 8 6 5 4 ♣ 2

The following hands, while technically they justify a raise, are so weak, containing only one honour-card, that they may be passed:

1. ♠ A 8 5 ♥ 9 6 2 ♦ 8 5 4 2 ♣ 7 6 3
2. ♦ K 6 5 ♥ 8 3 ♦ 9 7 4 2 ♣ 8 6 5 2

The following hand, with its balanced distribution, is a better one no-trump response:

♠ Q 3 2 ♥ K 8 5 ♦ 8 6 4 3 ♣ 9 6 2

The following hands are typical single raises of a one-spade bid:

♠ 10 8 6 5 3	♠ J 10 8 2	♠ A 9 6 5
♥ Q 6	♥ A K	♥ K 7
♦ A 6 5	♦ 6 4 3	♦ 9 8 6 5 2
♣ 9 5 2	♣ 8 6 4 3	♣ 10 7
♠ Q J 6	♠ A K 8 6 4	♠ J 10 5 3
♥ 8 5 4	♥ J 8 6 2	♥ Q J 5 3
♦ K Q J	♦ 6 5	♦ K 10 6 4
♣ 8 7 6 5	♣ 9 8	♣ 3

The requirement that any hand, to raise, must contain adequate trump support is one of the most vital in Bridge,

[1] Sometimes one no-trump should be preferred if holding only three trumps.

yet even this rule may sometimes be relaxed when the responder, balked by the rules from any other response, must turn in desperation to the raise:

♠ J 6 5
♥ A 6 4 2
♦ K Q 7
♣ 8 4 2

Partner has bid one spade. This hand, with 2+ honour-tricks, is too strong for a bid of one no-trump (page 177); yet too weak for a response of two no-trump, which is forcing to game. A single raise (two spades) best portrays the hand.

♠ 10 7 3
♥ 2
♦ J 7 4 3
♣ A 8 6 5 2

Partner has bid one spade. A response of two clubs is barred (page 182) because there is only one honour-trick. A response of one no-trump is dangerous; partner may pass and the opponents will run the entire heart suit. Raise to two spades.

With maximum single raises, although a raise would be technically correct, a suit take-out, which is forcing for one round, is often strategically better (page 182).

DOUBLE RAISES

A jump raise of partner's suit from one to three is called a double raise and is forcing to game.

Since the double raise commits the partnership to game, and usually in the bid suit, the regular adequate support (Q x x or x x x x) is *not enough* for a double raise. To insure proper control of the trump suit, the trump support must be at least four trumps headed by the Jack or a higher card; or any five trumps (J x x x or x x x x x).

The double raise usually shows at least five winners including two honour-tricks; but as in the case of single raises, the responder may avoid counting winners by a *case method* of valuation. Under the case method, the minimum requirements are:

At least J x x x in trumps, and

A singleton with at least 2 honour-tricks;
A doubleton with at least 2½ honour-tricks;
No short suit (4-3-3-3) but at least 3 honour-tricks.

The responder must remember, however, that he is forcing to game and must be prepared to play for game opposite a weak opening one-bid. Therefore he should not jump his partner's suit to three without considering the following factors:

1. *With the bare minimum honour-trick requirements, any available suit take-out in a biddable or shaded suit should be preferred.* Since this response is forcing for one round, the bidding will not die. At his next opportunity to bid the responder may raise his partner's suit.

Partner bids one spade. Holding

♠ Q J 7 5 ♥ A Q ♦ 8 7 6 ♣ K 9 5 4 *Bid two clubs.*

If partner rebids two hearts or two diamonds, bid *three* spades. If partner rebids two no-trump or two spades, bid *four* spades.

2. *With the minimum four-card trump holding of J x x x, prefer any available one-round-forcing suit take-out to a double raise,* especially when the hand barely justifies a double raise under the requirements given above.

Partner bids one heart. Holding

♠ A 8 5 4 ♥ J 7 6 3 ♦ 9 ♣ A 6 4 2 *Bid one spade.*

If partner rebids one no-trump, two diamonds or two clubs, bid *three* hearts. If partner rebids two hearts, bid *four* hearts.

3. *With the principal honour strength of the hand in the trump suit,* and only one honour-trick or less outside, seek a suit take-out and if necessary give only a single raise.

For example, partner having bid one spade, raise only to two spades with

1. ♠ A K 10 4 ♥ 6 ♦ 8 6 4 2 ♣ J 8 6 5
2. ♠ K Q J 2 ♥ 7 3 ♦ A 5 4 ♣ 7 6 3 2

Raise to three spades with ♠ A K Q 6 ♥ 7 5 ♦ K 7 5 4 ♣ Q 8 3, which is well over the minimum requirements.

4. *Because a minor-suit game requires eleven tricks, the double raise in the minor suit should be reserved for hands which are very strong, making it probable that eleven tricks at the minor can be made, or which are prepared to pass and to support a three no-trump contract.* With great top strength in partner's suit, a three no-trump contract will usually be the best one.

Partner's opening bid was one diamond. Holding:

1. ♠ 8 ♥ K 8 5 4 ♦ A 6 3 2 ♣ K 7 6 2 Bid one heart.
2. ♠ A K 6 ♥ 9 6 4 2 ♦ K Q 7 5 4 ♣ 3 Bid three diamonds.
3. ♠ K 5 2 ♥ 8 3 ♦ A K Q 7 5 ♣ 8 4 2 Bid three diamonds.
4. ♠ 6 ♥ K Q ♦ K Q 8 6 4 2 ♣ Q 7 6 5 Bid three diamonds.

With Examples 2, 3 and 4, if partner rebids three no-trump, responder passes.

Partner having bid one spade, the following hands are typical sound jump raises to three spades:

♠ K 8 6 4 3	♠ K Q J 7	♠ K 9 7 4
♥ K Q 2	♥ A Q J	♥ K Q 8
♦ 8 3	♦ 7	♦ A 10 5
♣ A J 7	♣ 10 6 5 3 2	♣ K 5 2[1]

TRIPLE RAISES

A raise of partner's suit from one to four is a triple raise, sometimes called a game raise, and its principal purpose is to make it difficult for the opponents to enter the bidding. It is a shut-out bid.

Being a shut-out bid, the triple raise is limited as to honour-tricks, to reduce the danger of missing a slam, though its playing strength is unlimited.

The requirements by the case method are:

Jump partner's suit to four, holding *five trumps*, a singleton, and about 1 honour-trick, but not more than 1½ honour-tricks;

With 6-5-1-1 distribution, ½ honour-trick or even less is sufficient.

Hands on which partner's major-suit one-bid may be raised to four, assuming the opening bid was one spade, are:

1. ♠ 9 7 6 5 2 ♥ A 5 ♦ 8 6 5 3 2 ♣ 9
2. ♠ K 10 6 5 3 ♥ K 7 4 2 ♦ J 8 3 ♣ 6
3. ♠ J 9 8 6 5 4 ♥ — ♦ 6 3 ♣ Q J 6 5 3
4. ♠ Q 10 9 7 5 ♥ 6 ♦ 10 8 6 5 4 2 ♣ 5

Hands distributed 5-3-3-2, such as ♠ K Q 7 4 3 ♥ 8 5 ♦ Q 7 4 ♣ 8 5 3, have too many losers, hence too few winners, for a jump to four. Prefer a single raise.

The raise of a minor-suit bid to four should not be attempted when there is any hope of making a game at no-

[1] A case in which the double raise has only 4+ winners. The raise is greatly preferable to a two no-trump response on this hand because it offers partner a chance to bid four spades if his suit is of five cards (even though not rebiddable) and to bid three no-trump (which responder will pass) with a four-card spade suit.

trump, for the three no-trump level is passed by the pre-emptive raise. Hands offering a major-suit response to the opening minor-suit bid are also bad as triple raises. The best type of hand for a triple raise in a minor suit is:

(*a*) A hopeless freak, which foretells danger of a game bid by opponents; or

(*b*) A hand which will permit partner to make game in the minor if he is strong enough to have a chance for game in no-trump.

Raise one club or one diamond to four with

1. ♠ — ♥ J 6 ♦ Q 8 7 6 5 4 ♣ K 7 6 3 2
2. ♠ 2 ♥ 5 ♦ A 8 6 5 2 ♣ 9 8 7 5 4 3

The triple raise, while a weak shut-out bid, must not be considered a 'stop' bid. Its strength is limited, but very often the opener, with a powerful hand, will be able to make a slam try (Chapter XXV).

A raise of more than three tricks (from one to five or six) should not be made, even in a minor where five-odd are needed for game. More scientific methods of reaching so high a contract, with forcing bids, and of leaving the way open for a slam, are at the player's disposal.

THE NO-TRUMP TAKE-OUT

To change the opener's suit by taking him out into another suit or no-trump is called a *take-out*. The take-out, while it does not necessarily deny all support for the opener's suit, does say that in the opinion of the responder a better contract may be found.

A take-out in no-trump portrays three qualities of the responding hand:

1. A minimum number of honour-tricks, the amount depending on whether the take-out is one, two or three no-trump;

2. Balanced distribution, and therefore a desire or at least a willingness to play the hand at no-trump.

3. Lack of a biddable suit or of sufficient trump support to justify a raise.

While a biddable suit may sometimes be hidden behind a no-trump take-out, or adequate trump support may be in-

cluded, the fact that the responder chooses to bid no-trump means that he feels the no-trump response best expresses the nature of his hand.

The responder has three available no-trump responses:

1. One no-trump, a negative response which shows a weak hand and little hope of game unless the opener has well above a minimum;

2. Two no-trump, a forcing bid which must be carried to game (unless the responder has previously passed);

3. Three no-trump, which is a hand almost identical to an opening one no-trump bid but is strictly limited to 3½-4 honour-tricks with 4-3-3-3 distribution.

ONE NO-TRUMP

Lacking the requirements for a suit take-out or raise, the responder should take out his partner's suit-bid of one with one no-trump if holding:

1+ to 2+ honour-tricks in the hand.

1 honour-trick, provided a stopper (J x x x, Q x, K x or better) is held in at least two suits.

K x, J x and J x.[1]

Q x, Q x and J x.[1]

A x and J x or an Ace with at least two tens.

In other words, a no-trump take-out is made whenever the responder has about 1 honour-trick with a fair possibility of winning two tricks at no-trump in his own hand. Such a hand may be very weak, as in the case of the hand containing one King and two Jacks. Other hands, nearer to the maximum than to the minimum, may contain 2 honour-tricks, perhaps an Ace, King and Queen in different suits. The opener will of course assume a near-minimum one no-trump take-out, in order to be safe.

Partner having opened one heart, bid one no-trump when holding:

1. ♠ K 6 2 ♥ Q 8 ♦ 9 6 4 2 ♣ 8 6 5 3
2. ♠ A Q ♥ 9 7 ♦ 10 8 6 5 2 ♣ 9 6 4 3
3. ♠ A J 6 ♥ 5 4 ♦ 9 8 7 6 ♣ 8 6 5 4

[1] The symbol 'x', denoting any low card or 'guard', means that the honour *must* be accompanied by one card or more.

4. ♠ A 4 3 ♥ 10 3 2 ♦ 5 4 3 2 ♣ 10 9 7 6
5. ♠ 8 3 ♥ J 8 7 ♦ Q 6 5 3 ♣ Q 9 4 2
6. ♠ J 8 5 ♥ 6 4 ♦ K 9 6 3 ♣ J 8 5 4
7. ♠ 9 6 5 2 ♥ A K ♦ 7 4 3 ♣ 8 5 4 2
8. ♠ A J 3 ♥ K 6 ♦ K 5 3 ♣ 9 6 5 3 2

Although the one no-trump response usually depicts balanced distribution, it must sometimes be made when the hand contains a singleton because there is no biddable suit or the biddable suit is not strong enough to show. When the hand has a singleton in a side suit, however, some other response should be sought and when the responder is void in any suit he should not bid one no-trump.

Weak hands in general call for a one no-trump response even when containing a five-card biddable suit unless the suit can be shown at the level of one. A response in any lower ranking suit requires a bid of two, and if the hand has less than two honour-tricks it is not safe to increase the contract. This does not apply in the case of six-card suits, for any time the responder has a six-card suit, if he is strong enough to respond at all, he should bid the suit.

It must always be remembered that one no-trump is a negative response and in general should be used to show a hand which is weak and which is bid only to give the opener another chance. The Approach Principle applies to the responding hand so far as safety permits and whenever possible a player should avoid too brutal an admission of weakness by making a shaded suit take-out, particularly at the level of one.

For example, with ♠ Q 10 6 3 ♥ 9 5 ♦ K 7 5 4 ♣ J 8 3 the proper response to partner's one-heart bid is one spade rather than one no-trump.

Hands containing adequate trump support call for a one no-trump response only when the trump support is a three-card length (Q x x, K x x or A x x) and when the responder has less than 1½ honour-tricks, and no singleton.

The following hands are all one no-trump take-outs of partner's one heart bid:

1. ♠ Q 5 2 ♥ 8 ♦ J 9 5 4 2 ♣ K 8 5 3
2. ♠ J 8 6 4 ♥ 10 ♦ A 6 4 2 ♣ Q 5 4 3

3. ♠ 8 6 ♥ 4 2 ♦ A Q 6 5 3 ♣ 7 6 5 2
4. ♠ 6 4 3 ♥ 10 9 5 ♦ A K 7 6 ♣ J 5 3
5. ♠ 6 4 ♥ 8 4 3 ♦ Q J 7 5 ♣ Q J 4 2
6. ♠ Q 7 4 ♥ 8 6 ♦ Q 6 3 ♣ K 8 7 5 4
7. ♠ K 6 3 ♥ Q 5 4 ♦ Q 6 4 2 ♣ 9 6 3
8. ♠ 5 4 ♥ A 6 2 ♦ J 8 7 4 3 ♣ Q 6 5

TWO NO-TRUMP

A take-out of partner's one-bid with two no-trump shows a strong hand and is forcing to game, unless the responder has previously passed. The requirements are:

2½ to 3½ honour-tricks;

Balanced distribution with no biddable suit;

At least two and usually all unbid suits stopped.

When the responder forces to game he takes a heavy responsibility on his shoulders and should not blindly take this step simply because his hand happens to count 2½ honour-tricks. When the honour-trick minimum is held it should be reinforced with Jacks and tens so that at least two of the unbid suits are doubly stopped. Another fortification for the minimum two no-trump response is a fit with partner's suit, something like A x, K J, Q J or three cards to an honour, making it probable that partner's suit can be established and turned into tricks at no-trump.

The two no-trump response does not deny adequate trump support; in fact, it is just as likely as not to have support for partner's suit. With support such as Q x x the responder is barred from giving a double raise, yet a single raise may be passed by the opener and a game missed. When no suit response is available and a single raise will not show the strength of the hand a two no-trump response is often the solution.

The following hands are two no-trump take-outs of an opening one-heart bid:

1. ♠ A Q 6 ♥ J 2 ♦ K 10 5 4 ♣ Q 9 4 2
2. ♥ K 9 ♥ Q 6 3 ♦ A K Q ♣ 9 8 6 5 2
3. ♠ K J 5 ♥ A J ♦ Q 10 5 4 ♣ Q 8 5 3
4. ♠ A 6 5 ♥ 9 4 2 ♦ A 7 4 3 ♣ A 6 2[1]

[1] Though containing 3 honour-tricks, this is a minimum two-no-trump response because of the lack of any fillers. Change one of

5. ♠ A K 4 ♥ 6 2 ♦ A 7 6 2 ♣ J 10 7 4
6. ♠ 7 6 4 2 ♥ J 10 5 ♦ A Q 6 ♣ K Q J
7. ♠ A Q ♥ 8 5 4 ♦ A 10 5 3 ♣ A 7 5 2

The two no-trump take-out, though a strong bid and a game force, is by its nature a limited bid. It should seldom be made with more than 3½ honour-tricks for fear partner, visualizing the possible minimum, will jump to the conclusion that a slam is out of the question and will close the bidding at three no-trump.

THREE NO-TRUMP

The take-out in three no-trump is a highly specialized bid to show:

(*a*) 3½ to 4 honour-tricks, with every suit stopped.
(*b*) 4-3-3-3 distribution.

With this limited range of honour and distributional values, the three no-trump response is so informative that it should be made even when holding a biddable suit or strong support for partner's suit, perhaps enough to justify a double raise.

The three no-trump take-out is a limit bid, its minimum and maximum being scarcely more than ½ honour-trick apart. Nevertheless, it is quite incorrect to get the impression, as do some players, that it is a stop bid. There is really no such thing as a stop bid unless, perhaps, it is a sign-off, and particularly not when the responding hand shows a minimum of 3½ honour-tricks. The three no-trump response is, however, very valuable in flashing a warning signal to partner when his own distribution is balanced and 7½ honour-tricks are unlikely to produce a slam.

The three no-trump take-out should rarely be made without at least a probable stopper in every suit. With one suit wide open, the two no-trump response is available.

The following hands justify a take-out of three no-trump when partner has made an opening bid of one in any suit:

1. ♠ A Q 6 ♥ Q 5 4 ♦ K J 8 5 ♣ K Q 6
2. ♠ A 9 3 ♥ A Q 5 ♦ A Q 8 ♣ J 10 5 4
3. ♠ K Q 10 ♥ Q J 10 ♦ A K Q 2 ♣ Q 8 6

the Aces to a King and though the hand has 2½ honour-tricks, a shaded suit take-out of two diamonds is better.

The following hands are good three-no-trump responses to partner's opening bid of one spade:

4. ♠ 9 5 4 ♥ A Q 6 ♦ A K 4 ♣ K 8 5 3
5. ♠ J 6 2 ♥ Q J 10 5 ♦ A K 8 ♣ K Q 7
6. ♠ A 9 4 ♥ K Q 8 5 ♦ J 10 6 ♣ A K 3

An immediate take-out of an opening suit bid with four or five no-trump would be a conventional bid (Chapter XXVI) and should therefore be avoided, a forcing take-out or other response coming first.

SUIT TAKE-OUTS

A suit take-out is an overcall of partner's opening bid with a new suit. There are three varieties of suit take-outs:

1. Forcing for one round—a bid of the minimum number required to overcall the opening bid.

2. Forcing to game—a bid of one trick more than necessary to overcall partner's suit, *or a double jump to three of a new suit, which is a forcing bid.*

3. Pre-emptive take-outs—a *double* jump to three.

THE ONE-ROUND FORCE

To take out an opening suit-bid of one, the responder must bid one in a higher-ranking suit, or two in a lower-ranking suit. Either of these responses is forcing for one round, requiring at least one rebid from partner. The opener escapes this obligation to rebid only when the responder has passed originally or when the intervening opponent on his right makes some bid which assures the responder of a second chance.

WITH A HIGHER-RANKING SUIT

A take-out in a higher ranking suit is known as a 'one-over-one' take-out. It is forcing for one round, and has the widest range of values of any response, showing:

1. A very weak hand with a five-card suit headed by only a Queen, or any six-card suit.

2. A fair hand with a shaded or biddable suit and 1 to 3 honour-tricks in the hand.

3. A strong hand with as many as 4-plus honour-tricks, just under a jump game-forcing take-out.

The following hands, on each of which the responder should take out partner's one-diamond bid with one heart, show the great range of the one-over-one:

1. ♠ 8 5 ♥ Q J 9 7 2 ♦ 9 6 3 ♣ 7 5 4
2. ♠ 5 2 ♥ K Q 6 5 ♦ 8 6 3 ♣ 9 7 6 5
3. ♠ 2 ♥ A 10 6 5 3 ♦ J 10 6 ♣ J 5 4 2
4. ♠ A 6 3 ♥ A K 9 6 4 ♦ 5 ♣ Q J 6 5
5. ♠ A 6 ♥ Q J 9 8 7 5 3 ♦ A 9 8 ♣ 10
6. ♠ A K 6 ♥ A K Q 5 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ 9 5 2

Many hands containing support for partner's suit and enough strength for a single and even a double raise call first for a one-over-one response when one is available.

To facilitate the one-over-one take-out, the responder may reduce the biddable suit requirements to A 10 x x, K 10 x x, Q 10 x x, or even less. For example, partner having bid one heart, respond with one spade holding

♠ A 10 6 3 ♥ 9 2 ♦ A 6 4 ♣ K 9 7 4

which would be a dangerous two no-trump response if partner is weak; and also holding

♠ K 10 5 4 ♥ 9 3 2 ♦ Q 9 6 4 2 ♣ 8

which would not be much fun to play at one no-trump because of the singleton club. Even with a fair biddable five-card suit but less than two honour-tricks, a shaded suit which can be shown at the level of one offers a safer response; over partner's one-heart bid, bid one spade with ♠ Q 10 6 3 ♥ 8 ♦ 7 4 2 ♣ A 10 9 6 5.

WITH A LOWER-RANKING SUIT

The take-out with two of a lower ranking suit falls into the same category as the one-over-one except that the minimum strength required cannot be quite so low, eight tricks being required to make two-odd. The requirements:

1½ honour-tricks with a 5-card biddable major suit;
2 honour-tricks with a 5-card biddable minor suit;
2½ honour-tricks with a 4-card or shaded biddable suit.

With less than these requirements the responder should find a possible raise or one-over-one take-out and failing this should bid one no-trump. Even the 1½ honour-trick minimum for showing a five-card major may drive the part-

nership too high if the responding hand has no intermediates or support for the opener's suit, but since it is more disadvantageous to suppress information about a five-card major suit, the lesser of the two evils is chosen. The weak major-suit take-out occurs only when the opening bid is one spade and the response is two hearts.

The following hands, on which responder should take out partner's opening one-spade bid with two of his biddable suit, demonstrate the range of values which may be shown by this take-out:

1. ♠ 10 9 5 ♥ A Q 6 4 2 ♦ 8 7 ♣ 9 6 5
2. ♠ 6 2 ♥ K Q 7 5 2 ♦ A 7 5 ♣ 6 3 2
3. ♠ 6 5 ♥ Q J 6 5 4 ♦ K 8 ♣ K 7 6 3
4. ♠ 8 3 2 ♥ 9 6 ♦ A K 8 4 2 ♣ 7 6 5
5. ♠ Q 7 5 ♥ K 6 ♦ A Q J 5 4 ♣ K 6 4
6. ♠ 8 6 ♥ A Q 5 4 ♦ K 8 2 ♣ K 7 6 5
7. ♠ A ♥ A 8 5 2 ♦ Q J 6 5 ♣ 9 5 4 2
8. ♠ A 6 ♥ A K 3 ♦ Q J 8 5 2 ♣ 7 6 5

In two cases the requirements may be shaded.

1. Holding strong support for partner's suit, slightly less than a double raise but too much for a single raise, the responder may show a biddable suit with 1 to 1½ honour-tricks.

2. Holding about 2 honour-tricks with some support for partner's suit, responder may take out with a shaded biddable suit such as Q 10 5 4.

In either of these cases, the responder, by first making a bid which is forcing for one round and at his next opportunity giving partner a single raise, shows the strength of his hand yet does not need to make a response which is forcing to game. Partner having bid one spade, the response on any of the following hands is two diamonds:

1. ♠ 7 6 5 3 ♥ A 2 ♦ A 10 6 4 ♣ J 6 5
2. ♠ J 8 5 4 ♥ 6 ♦ A J 7 3 2 ♣ 9 6 3
3. ♠ A Q 5 4 ♥ 7 2 ♦ Q 9 6 5 3 ♣ 8 5
4. ♠ 8 6 4 3 ♥ A K ♦ Q 10 4 3 ♣ 8 4 3

With a six-card suit in the hand the requirement is decreased to 1 honour-trick, and sometimes less. With two suits divided 5-5 the requirement is also 1 honour-trick. With two suits divided 6-5, or with any seven-card or longer

suit, a take-out should be made regardless of honour-tricks.[1] The responder should take out partner's opening one-spade bid with a suit-bid of two on the following hands:

Two clubs	*Two clubs*	*Two clubs*
♠ 9	♠ 6 2	♠ 8
♥ 7 6 5	♥ 9 4 3	♥ Q 6 4 3
♦ 8 4 3	♦ 7 6	♦ K 2
♣ K J 10 9 7 3	♣ A J 8 5 4 2	♣ J 8 6 5 3 2
Two hearts	*Two diamonds*	*Two diamonds*
♠ 6	♠ 8 5	♠ —
♥ J 10 8 6 4 2	♥ 2	♥ 8 5 3
♦ 5	♦ K 10 8 5 4	♦ A J 9 4 2
♣ Q 6 5 3 2	♣ Q J 6 3 2	♣ 8 6 5 4 3

THE FORCING TAKE-OUT

A take-out of partner's opening suit-bid of one with exactly one trick more than is necessary in another suit is forcing to game. Thereafter neither partner can allow the bidding to die until game (or a satisfactory penalty double) is reached.

Since a non-jump suit take-out which is forcing for one round is available, the forcing take-out should be made only with hands powerful enough to give practical certainty of game and fair hope of a slam. Such hands can be recognized as follows:

1. Hands with 3½ honour-tricks and a strong rebiddable suit.
2. Hands containing 3½ honour-tricks with a biddable suit *and* such strong support for partner's suit that a double raise could have been made.
3. Hands containing 4½ or more honour-tricks with any biddable (even a four-card) suit.

The jump forcing take-out may be at the range of two or of three, depending on whether responder's suit is higher or lower in rank than opener's suit. In either of these cases North's response is forcing to game:

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	2 ♥	
		or	
1 ♦	Pass	3 ♣	

[1] See 'Sign-off Bids', page 194.

Partner having made an opening bid of one heart, responder should make a jump forcing take-out with the following hands:

Two spades	*Three clubs*	*Three diamonds*
♠ A K 9 7 4	♠ 6 3	♠ A 5
♥ K 3 2	♥ Q 10 9 4	♥ Q 8 3
♦ A Q 8 5	♦ A 6	♦ A K 8 7
♣ 6	♣ A K Q 3 2	♣ K Q 6 3

Two spades	*Three diamonds*	*Two spades*
♠ A Q J 8	♠ —	♣ A K J 5 4 3
♥ Q J 6	♥ Q 9 7 4	♥ 2
♦ A K 6 2	♦ A K Q 6 4 2	♦ K Q 8
♣ K 10	♣ K Q 3	♣ A 4 2

DOUBLE-JUMP RESPONSES

A suit take-out of three, when it is a jump of more than one trick, is a forcing bid; but of a different kind.

Great care must be exercised in distinguishing between the *single jump* take-out, which is a powerful forcing bid, and the *double jump* to show a ready-made suit.

1. Opener	Responder	2. Opener	Responder
1 ♥	3 ♠	1 ♥	3 ♣

The three-spade response is a *double* jump, since two spades would have been a jump response. The three-club response is only a *single* jump.

PRE-EMPTIVE SUIT TAKE-OUTS

The pre-emptive response of four in a suit shows a strong rebiddable trump suit of six or seven cards, usually the latter. The hand should contain about 7 winners, with only five or six of them in the trump suit. *It should never have more than seven winners.* Likewise, the hand should never contain in all more than 1½ honour-tricks, and rarely that many.

The responder should make a pre-emptive response of four in another suit only with the hopeless type of hand which lacks defence values and makes it possible that despite partner's opening bid the opponents may be able to enter the

bidding and reach a game contract which they can make.

The following hands justify a response of four spades to partner's opening one-diamond bid:

♠ K J 10 8 6 5 3 2	♠ K Q 10 8 6 5 3	♠ Q J 10 9 5 3 2
♥ 9	♥ 8	♥ 6 3
♦ J 8 3	♦ Q 5 4	♦ K 5 4
♣ 2	♣ 7 2	♣ 2

The opening bidder should beware of slam tries, since the responder's hand is so weak in high cards.

The requirements may be shaded a trifle when pre-empting in a minor suit over partner's opening bid in the other minor. With both major suits available to the opponents, the need for drastic action is only too apparent. But even here the action must not be too drastic for two reasons: first, the penalty may be excessive; and second, partner may be well prepared to defeat an adverse game contract.

The opening bidder should base a raise to game on a count of the expected winners. The pre-emptor has about seven winners, so that the opening bidder must have four to raise. Because of the freakish nature of his partner's hand, the opening bidder may not count length winners, but only trump tricks and honour-tricks.

CHOICE OF SUITS IN RESPONDING

The responder, when he holds two or more biddable suits, should almost invariably follow the general rules covering the choice of suits (page 126).

These rules should be modified in the following cases:

When a four-card suit can be shown by a one-over-one response, while a five-card suit in the same hand would require a response of two, the one-over-one response should be preferred with hands containing 2 honour-tricks or less but the suits should be bid in normal order when holding more than 2 honour-tricks.

For example, partner having bid one heart, bid one spade with ♠ A Q 6 5 ♥ 7 2 ♦ K 8 5 4 3 ♣ 9 6; but bid two clubs when holding ♠ A J 6 5 ♥ 8 5 ♦ 7 3 ♣ A Q 6 5 4.

When making a one-round-forcing response in a lower

ranking four-card suit, the stronger of two biddable four-card suits should usually be chosen regardless of length, since it is unlikely that both suits will be shown.

For example, partner having bid one spade, bid two clubs rather than two diamonds with ♠ 9 6 5 ♥ Q 3 ♦ Q J 8 5 ♣ A K 7 4.

CHAPTER XVII

COMPETITIVE BIDDING

The forcing or non-forcing inferences of the various responses to opening suit-bids are not altered when the intervening opponent overcalls. The strength required for these responses must often be varied, however, because of the following considerations:

1. The fact that the opponent has made a bid guarantees that the opener will have another chance to bid whether the responder passes or not. This makes it unnecessary to keep the bidding open with highly shaded raises and take-outs.

2. The overcall may raise the bidding to a level at which the normal one-over-one take-out must be shown at two-odd, and the normal two-over-one take-out will require a bid of three. Since these take-outs are *still forcing for one round*, the opener may be hard put to find a safe rebid. Therefore a suit take-out at a higher level than the opener may have anticipated should be made only with somewhat better (an extra ½ honour-trick or an extra winner) than the minimum requirements laid down in the previous chapter.

The responses to opening suit-bids of one, assuming that the intervening opponent has overcalled, are as follows:

1. *Pass.* Extended to include—

(*a*) Hands containing adequate trump support but less than four winners, including 1 honour-trick.

(*b*) Suit and no-trump take-outs of one containing less than 1½ honour-tricks; and all no-trump hands lacking a stopper in the opponent's suit.

(*c*) Hands containing lower ranking biddable suits but less than 2+ honour-tricks; or, in the case of six-card suits, 2 honour-tricks.

For example, partner having opened with one diamond and second hand having overcalled with one spade, pass the following hands which would have justified responses had there been no intervening bid:

1. ♠J 10 8 6 ♥J 7 ♦9 5 3 ♣A 10 5 4
2. ♠10 7 5 ♥K J 7 ♦10 7 3 ♣A 10 7 3
3. ♠8 6 5 3 ♥6 ♦9 5 4 2 ♣K 10 6 5
4. ♠J 9 4 ♥A J 8 6 2 ♦10 4 ♣J 7 2

2. *Raise.* Single raises should be made on the basis of one of the two methods already described—the count of winners or the case methods requiring, in addition to adequate trump support, 1 honour-trick with a singleton, 1½ with a doubleton or two with 4-3-3-3 distribution. When the hand comes to four winners but does not contain at least 1 honour-trick, a pass is preferable.

The requirements for adequate trump support must be relaxed with hands containing 2 or 2½ honour-tricks and no available (or no safe) suit or no-trump response.

Assuming the bidding to have been:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	2 ♦		

North holds ♠10 8 4 ♥A 6 3 2 ♦J 3 ♣A Q 5 3.

A two-no-trump bid, without a diamond stopper, is out of the question; and the hand is not strong enough to bid three clubs, which would force partner to rebid. The solution is found in a raise to two spades, which South has the option of passing if his hand is a minimum.

The double raise changes neither in its strength nor in its forcing nature regardless of intervening bids. A raise from one to three is modified only in the following respects:

1. Since the *shaded* single raise is abandoned when an opponent overcalls, any single raise therefore shows concrete values. A *minimum* double raise need not be given, a single raise giving sufficient inference of strength.

2. When an opponent's overcall makes a raise to three the lowest possible raise, the responding hand may sometimes be stretched both as to trump support and number of winners. In such cases the raise from one to three is to be considered a single raise only and to show great strength the responder should jump immediately to four.

Assume the following bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	3 ♥		

North, holding ♠ Q 8 5 3 ♥ 6 2 ♦ K J 2 ♣ K 6 5 4, though he has only four winners, must raise to three spades rather than be shut out of the bidding. Holding ♠ K 6 4 ♥ 6 2 ♦ A 8 5 3 ♣ Q J 7 5, he likewise must bid three spades. Holding ♠ K 9 6 5 2 ♥ 3 ♦ A K 7 ♣ J 10 5 4, he should jump to four spades to convey the proper inference of strength. In this case the raise to four, being only a single jump, must be read by South as a strength-showing bid rather than a shut-out. Of course, since a game has already been reached, it is not forcing.

If West's overcall in the example above had been only two hearts, making it possible for North to give a single raise, his raise on the following hand should be only to two spades despite his holding of the minimum requirements for a double raise:

♠ A 8 6 5 ♥ 7 3 ♦ A Q 6 ♣ J 6 4 3

A pre-emptive raise to four remains the same if it is a skip of more than one trick (as, one spade by partner, two hearts by opponent, *four spades*).

FREE NO-TRUMP TAKE-OUTS

The no-trump take-out at all levels is controlled by the stringent requirement that the opponents' suit must be stopped; and any *jump* bid in no-trump must show not one but two stoppers.

A one no-trump response over an opponent's overcall varies in strength according to vulnerability. When vulnerable, responding hand must have at least two honour-tricks, distributed in three suits, including the opponents' suit. Not vulnerable, he may reduce this to 1½-plus honour-tricks. He may bid one no-trump with as little as Q x x or J x x x as his stopper in the opponents' suit, but should prefer another bid, if one is available, unless his stopper is as good as the King.

Opener having bid one heart and opponent having overcalled with one spade, bid one no-trump, not vulnerable, with ♠ A 10 2 ♥ 7 3 ♦ K 8 6 4 ♣ Q 10 5 3. Vulnerable, the hand should contain added strength such as a Jack in any suit.

A two no-trump response, even though the opponent's over-

call is at the level of two-odd and two no-trump is the cheapest no-trump bid available, is nevertheless a far stronger bid. It is virtually equivalent to the usual jump two no-trump response when there is no opposing bidding, requiring 2½ honour-tricks. Included in these must be the stopper in the opponents' suit, and two stoppers are desirable unless a 'fit' such as K x or Q J with partner's suit makes it probable that a sufficiency of immediate winners can be found. Though technically not forcing, because it is not a jump bid, it must obviously be as strong a hand as though made without the opponent's bid.

A sound two-no-trump response, partner having bid one heart and opponent two diamonds, is ♠ Q 10 3 ♥ K 6 ♦ K J 7 ♣ A J 7 6 2. With a weaker hand the responder should try to find some other response.

A three no-trump response, if a jump bid, is just the same as though the intervening overcall had not occurred, with the one difference that it must include a stopper in the opponents' suit.

FREE SUIT TAKE-OUTS

The suit take-out at the range of one is still a one-over-one, despite the opposing bid, and is forcing for one round. It shows a hand containing a biddable suit and about 1½ honour-tricks; but a four- or five-card suit headed by 1½ honour-tricks is usually not sufficient to justify the response, and should be fortified by some outside strength.

♠ K 10 6 5 2 ♥ 8 6 ♦ K Q 7 5 ♣ 9 2 or
♠ A J 7 5 ♥ 7 4 3 ♦ Q J 5 2 ♣ Q 6 are enough for a *free* response of one spade, not vulnerable, when partner's opening bid has been overcalled. When vulnerable, the hand should have an extra plus value or one more card in the trump suit.

A great strain will be placed upon the opener by thoughtless bidding in a situation like:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	2 ♦	2 ♠	Pass
		or	
1 ♥	2 ♦	3 ♣	Pass

The opening hand may have been prepared to rebid over a response of one spade or two clubs, but has no safe rebid available when forced one trick higher. To allow for this, North's response in each of the above circumstances should be stronger than usual, containing about 2½ honour-tricks, or support for hearts in case South should have to make a rebid of three hearts in order to obey the forcing bid. North's hands, if he were thoughtful, would be something like:

1. ♠ K J 8 7 5 ♥ J 10 6 ♦ 5 3 ♣ A Q 7
2. ♠ A 8 ♥ Q 7 2 ♦ Q 6 ♣ K Q 10 8 4
3. ♠ 9 2 ♥ 6 5 ♦ A 7 3 ♣ A Q J 9 8 6

BIDS OVER OPPONENT'S TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

When an opponent doubles partner's opening suit-bid of one (for a take-out—page 247) he may show a hand as strong or stronger than the opening bid, a fact which must affect the responder's choice of responses.

With strong hands, 2 or more honour-tricks, redouble with distributed strength, and make a jump forcing take out with a freak.

With moderate hands, 1 to 1½ honour-tricks, take out in no-trump or in a five-card suit, depending on the type of hand.

With hands weak in honours but strong distributionally make a shut-out raise or shut-out bid in a strong rebiddable suit. A double raise in this position shows about five winners and is *not a forcing bid.*

With weak hands pass unless a raise can be given; but make a shaded raise whenever possible.

Assuming the partner has bid one diamond and intervening opponent has doubled:

♠ Q 10 6 4 ♥ K 5 2 ♦ A 6 ♣ J 9 7 4	Redouble. The hand contains more than two honour-tricks with strength in all suits. It is suitable for a penalty double of any suit the opponents bid.
♠ K Q 6 3 ♥ A 9 7 4 ♦ 7 ♣ Q J 5 2	Redouble, despite the singleton diamond. The rest of the hand is so strong that partner, however weak his trump suit, can make his contract with tricks in other suits.

♠ K 4
♥ A K Q 9 6 4 2
♦ —
♣ 9 6 4 2

Bid two hearts (one-round force). Game is almost sure, yet partner, with a four-card diamond suit, may be unable to make his contract.

Bid one no-trump.	Bid one heart.	Bid three diamonds.
♠ Q 6 5	♠ 6 2	♠ 8 5 4
♥ J 8 4 3	♥ K Q 8 7 4	♥ 6
♦ A 6	♦ 9 6 3	♦ Q 9 7 5 3
♣ J 7 5 2	♣ 10 8 5	♣ Q J 10 6

Bid two diamonds. (Single raise)	Bid three diamonds. (Double raise)	Bid three hearts. (Shut-out)
♠ 4	♠ 6	♠ 8
♥ 8 6 4	♥ 5 3 2	♥ Q J 10 9 7 6 3
♦ Q 6 5 2	♦ 10 9 7 6 5	♦ 8 2
♣ 8 7 6 4 3	♣ Q J 7 6	♣ Q 6 4

WHEN PARTNER'S NO-TRUMP BID IS DOUBLED

When an opponent makes a take-out double of partner's opening one no-trump bid, the responder's procedure is based upon his knowledge that his partner's hand has 4 honour-tricks and at least three cards in every suit.

Responder should redouble if he holds any 2 honour-tricks; this requirement should be lowered to 1½ honour-tricks if the responder has a guarded honour in each of at least three suits. A redouble tells the opener that a profitable penalty double can probably be made when the defenders bid.

Holding about 1-plus honour-trick, responder should simply pass the double.

With only 1 honour-trick or less, and with a five-card or longer suit, the responder should take out in the suit. No matter how weak the suit, he may bid it.

Responder should never 'rescue' the doubled one no-trump in a four-card suit, no matter how weak his hand is. He simply passes.

SIGN-OFF OR RESCUE BIDS

To 'rescue' partner's opening bid, simply because of weakness in his suit, is one of the most tempting yet most dangerous bidding situations in Contract Bridge. The best rescue

is a pass, which stops the bidding at a low level and warns partner of weakness. Any other bid should usually show strength, largely because partner will expect strength to be behind every bid the responder makes.

The only exceptions occur in rare instances when the 'rescue' inference is so clear that no possible misunderstanding can arise between partners, and then only when the responder can reasonably expect to win enough extra tricks at his rescue bid to justify increasing the contract.

Almost all rescue bids are made to take partner out of no-trump contracts. These are known as 'sign-off' bids and can be recognized by the following characteristics:

1. The responder takes out his partner's opening suit or no-trump bid with two of any suit, and if opener then rebids two no-trump, responds with three of the same suit.

2. The responder, over an intervening pass, gives his partner a single raise; and then, when opener rebids in a new suit, returns to the original suit at the lowest possible level.

The following bids are sign-offs:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 N T	Pass	3 ♦	

and

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	3 ♠	

With his first response in each case North gave tentative promise of strength. With his second, or sign-off bid, North said: 'My hand is suitable for play only in this suit, and in addition I have a minimum or near-minimum hand. It is useless to try another suit, or to bid any higher in the same suit except on your own responsibility.'

The sign-off in partner's suit (after raising) should be made when the raise originally given was of the shaded variety.

The sign-off in responder's suit means that, because of weakness in the opener's suit, he made his first take-out on a six- or seven-card suit in a hand like:

♠ 6 3 ♥ 9 ♦ Q J 10 6 5 4 ♣ 9 6 5 2 or
♠ 8 ♥ 6 3 ♦ J 10 8 7 5 4 2 ♣ 7 6 3

A player should never respond when he can safely pass the opening bid. The response in a long weak suit is made only when holding a void or singleton in partner's suit. With the first hand shown above responder should pass if the opening bid is one spade, but should take out one heart with two diamonds.

Having made a weak suit take-out of this sort, with the intention of signing off if necessary, responder should not sign off if he can safely pass the opener's second bid.

Holding ♠ — ♥ 8 4 3 ♦ Q 10 8 6 5 4 3 ♣ J 6 5, responder should take out an opening one-spade bid with two diamonds. Now if the opener bids two no-trump, responder should sign off with three diamonds, for his hand is worthless at no-trump; but if the opener bids two hearts he should pass.

Usually the responder should not complete the sign-off when the opener rebids his suit, for the opener may have a long suit of his own and be weak in the responder's suit. In such cases the contract will have been increased unnecessarily. With a seven-card suit and a void in partner's suit, the sign-off should be given; with a singleton in partner's suit or with only a six-card suit the rebid should be passed.

The following situation shows a bid by the opener which, though weak, is not a 'sign-off'; though it has been so classified for years:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 N T	Pass
3 ♥			

By his third minimum bid in the same suit, the opener shows that his hand has no added values and that the principal strength is in a long, fairly weak suit unsuitable to no-trump play. The hand is probably something like ♠ 5 2 ♥ K J 10 8 6 4 ♦ 6 3 2 ♣ A Q. However, this bid cannot overcome the fact that South has an opening bid and at least a six-card major suit; and the responder, with something like Q x in hearts and a very strong hand, should raise to four hearts.

CHAPTER XVIII

PART-SCORE BIDDING

A part-score has the following effect on bidding:

1. An opening bid of one should be considered semi-forcing; the responder must of course pass with a worthless hand, but should try to keep the bidding open with the slightest excuse, since at the risk of going down one extra trick the partnership may score a game.

With a part-score of 40, 50, or 60, a shaded raise to an opening one-spade bid should be given with ♠ 9 8 5 4 ♥ 9 6 ♦ Q 5 3 2 ♣ 9 8 7, although this hand does not ordinarily conform to the minimum requirements.

2. With a part-score of 30, 40 or 50 a response of one no-trump to any opening suit-bid of one should be considered unconditionally forcing for one round, since only two in a major suit or three in a minor are required for game and the responder may at times wish to bid one no-trump on a strong hand in order to trap opponents.

3. Bids which are ordinarily forcing to game, and pre-emptive bids in general, retain their usual meanings, subject to the following modifications in requirements and in effect:

An opening two-bid in a suit is a forcing bid even though with the part-score it may be enough for game. It is forcing for only one round, however, unless partner is able to make a positive response.

When an opening one-bid would be enough for game with a part-score, a player should to some extent relax the strict requirements governing two-bids. He should reduce only honour-trick minimums and never playing strength. The hand must be strong enough to make a contract of three-odd with no support from partner—that is, it must contain nine sure winners. In such cases the honour-trick requirements may at times be reduced as low as 3½ honour-tricks.

An opening two-bid should be avoided with a balanced

hand containing the 5½ or 6 honour-tricks which usually call for a suit-bid of two. If the extent of strength is given away to the opponents, they will refrain from any attempt to contest the part-score contract, and all chance for making a penalty double will be lost.

After an opening two-bid has been made to a part-score, any positive response by the responder, or any bid in a new suit by either partner, as well as jump bids, asking bids, and 4-5 no-trump bids, are again forcing.

To summarize the procedure after a forcing two-bid when there is a part-score:

(*a*) An opening two-bid in a suit is forcing for at least one round, even when it is enough for game.

(*b*) If responder makes any positive response (raise, suit take-out, or jump to three no-trump) opener must rebid at least once. If responder makes a negative two no-trump response, he may pass.

(*c*) If opener rebids in any new suit it is again forcing for one round; and thereafter whenever *either* partner bids a new suit, it is forcing for one round. If either partner rebids in no-trump or in a suit already bid, it is not forcing.

(*d*) In order to make a forcing rebid in a suit which has previously been bid, the player must jump one trick in that suit.

For example, if North and South have a part-score of 70, an opening two-spade bid may be made on one of the following hands:

♠ A K Q 8 6 4 2 ♥ A 7 6 ♦ K 5 ♣ 3

♠ A K J 5 4 ♥ A Q J 10 7 ♦ K 6 ♣ 8

Only a one-spade bid should be made on the following hand, enticing the opponents to enter the bidding and be doubled:

♠ A Q 7 6 ♥ A 5 ♦ A K 8 4 ♣ K J 6

A two-bid must be made on a hand as strong as the following, since it is unlikely that any other player will be strong enough to bid:

♠ A K Q 7 ♥ K Q J 5 4 ♦ A K 8 ♣ K

If the bidding, with a part-score of 60, is as follows:

South	West	North	East
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass

The two-spade response is forcing for one round and South must bid again.

If South bids three hearts, three spades, or two no-trump it is not forcing.

If South bids three diamonds, three clubs, four hearts, four spades, or any four no-trump or asking bid, it is forcing.

4. A player may make a forcing take-out of an opening suit or no-trump bid of one, or a forcing rebid over partner's response, despite a part-score, with a jump of one trick in a new suit. These bids are forcing for only one round.

The usual honour-trick requirements may be shaded by the responder with solid suits or two-suiters. He should not shade the honour-trick requirements for the forcing take-out on any balanced hand which offers strong defence against a possible opposing overcall.

After the forcing take-out, the opener must bid at least once. If he raises responder's suit, it is in turn forcing for one round. If he bids a new suit or jumps one trick in his own suit, it is also forcing for one round. As in the case of the opening two-bid, any bid in a new suit and any jump in a suit previously bid is forcing for one round thereafter. But if either partner simply rebids his suit or bids no-trump, the other may now pass.

Having a part-score of 60, and partner having made an opening bid of one heart, bid two spades holding:

♠ K Q J 10 9 6 ♥ Q J 10 ♦ A 6 5 2 ♣ —

However, holding the following hand:

♠ A J 8 3 ♥ Q 6 ♦ K Q 7 5 ♣ A Q 7

only one spade should be bid; partner will not drop the bidding short of game and if the opponents overcall, they may be doubled.

5. Any opening four-bid is purely a shut-out bid. The Opening Three-bid means exactly the same thing as when there is no part-score, and partner's responses are the same (Chapter XIV).

The common belief that a bid is strength-showing because it is more than needed for game is entirely incorrect. Having at his disposal an opening two-bid and a jump suit response,

a player does not need to use the regular pre-emptive bid to show strength, and such bids are particularly valuable in part-score situations.

6. A double raise in partner's suit, or a non-jump suit take-out which is ordinarily forcing for one round, mean exactly the same thing with or without a part-score. These bids are not forcing, however, when game has already been reached.

7. In general, an opening two no-trump bid or a jump response of two no-trump should not be made. With hands whose strength is distributed, it is better tactics to keep the bidding low and give the opponents every opportunity to overcall.

CHAPTER XIX

REBIDS

When a response has been made to an opening suit-bid of one, the opener has another chance to bid. If the response was not forcing he must decide whether to pass or not; and if to bid, what to bid. If the response was forcing, assuming that the opponents pass, he must decide on the bid which best shows the type of hand he holds. Any second bid made by the opening hand is called a *rebid.*

The nature of the rebid will depend upon the bidding zone in which the opener's hand may be classified. The symptoms which will determine the proper zone are the general strength of the opener's hand and the maximum and minimum levels of strength which may have been shown by his partner's response.

CHOOSING THE ZONE

The general bidding situations which determine the proper zone of bidding and the opener's choice of rebids are as follows:

1. MINIMUM (PART-SCORE) ZONE

Situation: The response was one no-trump, a single raise, or a pre-emptive suit take-out. The opener has a minimum or near-minimum hand—this means that he could not remove an honour-trick, or a card of the trump suit, from his hand and still have an opening bid.

Object: Safety. If the response was a single raise, pass, since the contract is a safe one. If the response was one no-trump, pass with a balanced hand and no six-card or longer suit. With a six-card trump suit, rebid the suit. With an unbalanced hand show a second biddable suit if lower ranking than the first, or rebid a rebiddable suit; otherwise, pass.

A pre-emptive suit take-out can always be safely passed.

2. INTERMEDIATE ZONE

Situation: The symptoms of this zone are of two kinds:

(*a*) The opener has a weak hand, but the response was a suit take-out (forcing for one round) which may show either a weak or a very strong hand.

(*b*) The opener has a strong hand, but the response was one no-trump or a single raise, which may have been highly shaded.

Object: Information and safety.

(*a*) With a weak hand, the opener should try to show partner the distribution of his hand, by bidding no-trump if he can do so at the level of one, by giving partner a single raise if he has adequate trump support, by showing a new lower ranking suit, or by rebidding a rebiddable suit.

(*b*) If the opener is strong but responder may be very weak, opener should make a rebid which shows strength but which responder need not carry to game, unless he has rebid values of his own: a jump raise in partner's suit, a jump rebid of opener's suit, a bid or raise to two no-trump, or a non-jump bid of a new suit at the level of three, which is forcing for one round but which need not be carried to game. Also included in this category are 'reverse bids' which are explained on page 130.

3. GAME ZONE

Situation: Either partner makes a response which is forcing to game, or opener is so strong that game is possible even if responder has a weak hand.

Object: Security. The opener's first thought is to make sure the bidding will not be dropped short of game. If the response was forcing to game, the opener should simply make the rebid which best shows the strength and distribution of his hand. If the response is not forcing to game, the opener makes a forcing rebid by jumping one trick in a new suit, or bids game immediately in a suit or no-trump.

4. SLAM ZONE

This does not mean a slam must surely be bid, but that the opener wishes to explore the slam possibilities before contenting himself with a game contract.

Situation: Opener has a strong hand *and* the response is forcing to game.

Object: Information and security. The opener tries to

make some bid which will not risk having the bidding dropped at game and which will either give partner as much information as possible or coax some desired information from partner.

WHEN THE RESPONSE WAS FORCING TO GAME

When the response to the opening bid was forcing to game the opening hand has little to worry about. He knows that the responder's hand is so strong that a game will be reached, so that the safety factor (the danger of being set) need not be considered and the only problem is how best to give as much information as possible about the nature of the hand.

RESPONSES TO A FORCING TAKE-OUT

When the response is a jump suit take-out, which is forcing to game, the opener has only to look at his hand and choose any available rebid in the following order:

1. If he has a second biddable suit in his hand, he should bid the new suit.
2. Lacking a second biddable suit but with a rebiddable suit, he should rebid his suit.
3. With adequate trump support for responder's suit, he should raise. Added values justifying a double raise should not be shown at this point.
4. With very strong support for partner's suit, the opener may now make a jump asking bid or try for a slam with a conventional four no-trump bid (Chapter XXVI).
5. Lacking any of these requirements, the opener should respond with the minimum number of no-trump necessary, the minimum no-trump bid being in this case, as in almost all cases, a negative bid.

For example, assuming the bidding to have been:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	Pass	2 ♠	Pass

South's rebid should be:

Three hearts, holding ♠ 7 ♥ A Q 6 5 ♦ K 8 2 ♣ A J 10 7 5;
Three clubs, holding ♠ Q 6 3 ♥ 9 2 ♦ A 7 ♣ A J 10 7 6 3;
Three spades, holding ♠ K 7 4 ♥ 6 2 ♦ A 9 8 ♣ K Q 10 7 5;
Two no-trump, holding ♠ A 7 ♥ K Q 6 ♦ 10 8 5 4 ♣ K J 6 2.

With a near-minimum opening bid, the opener should sometimes fail to show a second biddable suit when it would carry the bidding to four-odd. Thus, when the bidding is:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♥	Pass

South should bid three spades, holding:

♠ K Q 10 6 5 ♥ 8 2 ♦ 7 6 ♣ A Q 9 4

His hand is too weak for a bid of four clubs. This consideration also causes him to bid three no-trump, rather than four clubs. holding:

♠ A J 7 4 3 ♥ 8 5 ♦ Q 10 ♣ K Q J 2

With added honour strength, he shows the second suit no matter what the necessary bid. He bids four clubs on:

♠ K Q 10 6 5 ♥ 8 2 ♦ A 6 ♣ A Q 6 3

REBIDDING OVER A DOUBLE RAISE

When partner's response to a suit-bid was a double raise, which is also forcing to game, the kind of rebid depends upon whether or not the opener believes there is possibility of a slam. With a fair hand which offers a good chance for a slam if a favourable distributional fit is found, the opener should usually show a new suit. With a fairly weak hand, the rebid depends upon the distribution of the opening hand.

If the suit is a minor, the opener should show any shaded or biddable four-card major if he has one. Without a major-suit rebid, he must bid three no-trump unless he has unbalanced distribution *and* can anticipate at least eleven tricks in the minor suit.

The proper rebid would be three no-trump even on the following unbalanced hand, because it is so weak: opening bid one club; response, three clubs. Bid three no-trump:

♠ K Q J ♥ J ♦ 10 9 7 6 ♣ A Q 6 5 2

If the suit is a major, the decision is first made whether or not to try for a slam (page 289). If there is to be no slam try, the opener should simply bid four of the major suit, unless he has 4-3-3-3 distribution, or 4-4-3-2 distribution and possible stoppers in the other suits, in which case he bids three no-trump.

For example, opener having bid one spade, after a raise to three spades he should bid four clubs (a slam try) with:

♠ A Q 7 6 5 ♥ 8 ♦ A K 7 ♣ Q J 8 5

Bid three no-trump with ♠ A J 6 2 ♥ Q 5 ♦ A 9 7 4 ♣ K J 6
Bid four spades with ♠ K Q 8 6 4 ♥ A K 2 ♦ 6 5 3 ♣ 8 5
Bid four spades with ♠ A K 6 5 ♥ A Q 7 2 ♦ 6 5 ♣ 9 4 3

REBIDDING OVER TWO NO-TRUMP

When the response was two no-trump, the opening hand should usually raise to three no-trump with balanced distribution (unless the hand contains more than four honour-tricks and he wishes to make a slam try) and rebid his suit or a new suit with unbalanced distribution.

With balanced distribution and distributed strength, the opener should simply raise to three no-trump, even though his hand contains a rebiddable suit. This is not true, however, in the case of hands containing six-card suits, which should be rebid.

For example, when the opening one-spade bid has been taken out with two no-trump, the opener should bid three no-trump holding ♠ A J 10 8 5 ♥ 7 6 3 ♦ A Q 8 ♣ J 4

Bid three spades with ♠ K 9 8 7 4 2 ♥ K Q 7 ♦ A 8 ♣ 7 3
Bid three spades with ♠ A K 8 6 4 ♥ K Q 6 ♦ 7 ♣ 8 6 4 3

REBIDS AFTER A ONE-ROUND FORCE

In general the opening hand, after a response to an opening bid, becomes the responding hand: he must respond to his partner's take-out in such a way as to show his strength and the contract he prefers in accordance with his distribution.

Every rebid shows a certain distribution combined with a certain amount of honour-strength. The rebid should be chosen as follows:

REBIDS IN THE SAME SUIT

With a six-card or longer trump suit, rebid the suit or show a new suit regardless of partner's response. Show the strength of the hand by the quantity of the rebid.

With 5-4-3-1 distribution, the rebid depends upon whether

the opener has a rebiddable suit, a second biddable suit, or adequate trump support for the responder's suit. With only one of these, there is no choice. With only a rebiddable suit the opener rebids his suit; with no rebiddable suit but a second biddable suit, he shows the second suit unless it must be shown at the level of three, in which case it is a one-round forcing bid and should not be made with less than 4 honour-tricks. With only support for partner's suit, he raises. With a choice between two or more of these rebids, he should choose as follows:

1. With 4 honour-tricks or more, he should look for a strength-showing rebid: a bid of a new suit at the level of three, a double raise in partner's suit (provided he has four trumps), or a jump rebid in the original suit provided it is rebiddable and the hand contains 4½ to 5 honour-tricks.

2. With a fair hand containing about 3½ honour-tricks or less, he should show a new biddable suit if it does not require a bid of three, should give partner a single raise or should make the minimum rebid in his original suit.

REBIDS IN NO-TRUMP

With 4-4-3-2, 5-4-2-2 or 5-3-3-2 distribution, the opener has, in addition to his choice between suit-bids and raises, the possibility of a rebid in no-trump. With 4-3-3-3 he has little choice but to rebid in no-trump.

A rebid of one no-trump, when the response was a one-over-one, is a negative or minimum rebid. When the response was in a lower ranking suit, however, the no-trump rebid must be *two* no-trump, which shows a stronger hand.

A no-trump rebid at the level of one is made with any balanced hand containing 3½ honour-tricks or less, and with some hands containing 4 *bare* honour-tricks.

When two no-trump is a jump rebid, the hand must be very strong—about 4½ honour-tricks.

When two no-trump is not a jump bid (when the suit take-out was in a lower ranking suit) it shows 3½ honour-tricks in three suits. This may be shaded to 3 honour-tricks only with all suits stopped and with added values in tens and nines (see Principle of Preparedness).

REVALUATION FOR RAISES

When partner has made a suit take-out of the opening bid, and the opener has adequate trump support for the responder's suit, he may count his winners exactly as though he were the responding hand. His count of winners is based upon honour-, long-suit and ruffing-tricks, which were explained in Chapter IV.

In general, a suit take-out of an opening one-bid shows at least three winners, and the opener should raise once if he has five supporting winners. To give a double raise the opener should have at least four trumps and 1 honour-trick more than he needed for his opening bid.

Without this additional honour-trick, the opener should not give a double raise without very strong distributional support—about 6½ or 7 supporting winners. For example:

Opening bid one heart, response one spade. Raise to three spades with

♠ Q 10 9 3 ♥ A K 9 6 5 2 ♦ K 3 ♣ 8

The rules governing the opener's double raises apply primarily to major suits. He should be careful not to raise the responder's minor suit to four, passing the three no-trump level, without at least seven supporting winners and 4½ honour-tricks.

REBIDS AFTER ONE NO-TRUMP

A response of one no-trump is a minimum or negative response and is not forcing. The opener should consider the possibility of a pass as well as of a rebid. He should pass with any hand of balanced distribution and no six-card or longer suit when the hand contains only 3½ honour-tricks or less. He should pass a hand with unbalanced distribution unless he has a second biddable suit, a void, or an additional honour-trick.

The opener should rebid his suit even with a minimum if it is six-cards long or longer.

With a stronger hand the opener should make a rebid in a new suit, or raise the no-trump take-out. A raise of a no-trump take-out shows a very strong hand of 4½-5 honour-tricks.

THE FORCING REBID

The forcing take-out is not restricted to the responding hand but may also be used by the opener. It is a jump rebid in a new suit after partner has responded to the opening bid, and it is forcing to game.

The responses to a forcing rebid are exactly the same as opener's rebids after a forcing take-out, which are listed earlier in this chapter.

REBIDS WHEN PARTNER RAISES

When partner gives a single raise to the opening one-bid, the opener should now count his winners. He must remember that the raise may be a shaded one; therefore caution is required in rebidding.

With 5½ winners, the opener may now rebid to the level of three-odd.

With *seven* winners the opener may now rebid to the level of four-odd.

In either case, any bid in a new suit by the opener is forcing for one round; he may safely bid two or three of a new suit, even when prepared to go to game later.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass

3 ♥ or 3 ♦ } are equivalent. *But North may pass three hearts.*

South would bid three hearts holding

♠ ♥ A 6 Q J 7 5 ♦ K J 4 ♣ Q 10 6 5=6 winners

He would bid three diamonds, holding

♠ 6 5 ♥ A Q 7 6 ♦ A K 4 3 ♣ Q J 6=5½+winners and if North signed off by returning to three hearts, South would then pass.

South would jump at once to four hearts with

♠ A 5 ♥ A Q J 8 6 5 ♦ K J 10 ♣ 3 2=7½ winners.

REBIDS BY THE OPENING HAND

Illustrated Summary

I. WEAK (POSSIBLE MINIMUM) REBIDS

1. REBID OF ONE NO-TRUMP

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♥	1 ♠
1 NT	

The rebid shows: Opening hand is minimum or near minimum (not more than 3½ honour-tricks, probably less). Balanced distribution with no six-card suit. Opener may have a rebiddable heart suit, or a second biddable suit, or adequate support for spades; but with balanced distribution and no added values, prefers to emphasize the weakness of his hand. Examples:

♠ 8 5	♠ 9 6 2	♠ A 6 4
♥ A Q J 7	♥ A K 7 5 3	♥ A Q 9 2
♦ K J 7 6	♦ A 5 4	♦ K 5
♣ Q J 4	♣ 6 2	♣ 8 7 4 3

With any one of these hands, opener would have passed a response of one no-trump.

2. TWO OF A SUIT LOWER RANKING THAN OPENER'S FIRST SUIT

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♥	2 ♣
2 ♦	

The rebid shows: Opener may have a near minimum hand with no more honour-tricks than he needed for his first bid. The diamond suit may be a shaded suit, if opener is too weak to bid two no-trump or raise to three clubs. Opener may have either balanced or unbalanced distribution. With a weak hand he may have a four-card heart suit and a five-card diamond suit (page 134). This rebid affirms or denies nothing except that opener is probably too weak to bid two no-trump, raise to three clubs, or make any stronger bid. Examples:

♠ Q 6	♠ 9	♠ 8 5	♠ 9 6
♥ A Q 7 5 2	♥ A 10 7 5 3	♥ A K 6 5	♥ K J 10 5
♦ A J 6 4	♦ K Q 10 7 5	♦ A 10 9 7 3	♦ K Q 5 4
♣ 5 4	♣ Q 2	♣ 4 3	♣ A 6 2

3. TWO OF A LOWER RANKING SUIT WHEN IT INCREASES THE BIDDING LEVEL

Opener	*Responder*		*Opener*	*Responder*
1 ♥	1 ♠	or	1 ♥	1 N T
2 ♦			2 ♦	

The rebid shows: Opener has two biddable suits. Either he has unbalanced distribution or at least ½ honour-trick above a minimum; otherwise, he could have bid one no-trump (or passed responder's one-no-trump take-out). In either case, this rebid shows slight added values either in honour-tricks or in distribution. Examples:

♠ 8 6	♠ J 6 4	♠ 7	♠ Q 6
♥ A K 6 5 4	♥ A K 9 5	♥ Q J 10 8 4	♥ K Q 10 8
♦ K Q 10 5	♦ A Q J 2	♦ A K 7 5 2	♦ A Q 7 6 4
♣ 4 3	♣ 10 7	♣ 9 3	♣ J 7

4. REBID OF ONE IN A NEW SUIT (FORCING FOR ONE ROUND)

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♣	1 ♥
1 ♠	

The rebid shows: This rebid gives no specific information. Opener may have a minimum hand and, for purposes of safety, try to find the safest suit for a part-score contract; he may have a very strong hand and take this opportunity to make a cheap forcing bid. Responder is expected to treat this about as an opening one-bid, except that he must assume that the spade suit is a four-card and possibly a shaded suit and should not raise spades without four trumps or (rarely) three strong trumps (K Q x, etc.). Examples:

♠ A J 6 5	♠ K 10 8 7	♠ A K Q 6	♠ A 10 8 5 2
♥ 4 3	♥ J 5 2	♥ 7 4	♥ 6
♦ Q 6 2	♦ A	♦ K J	♦ 7
♣ A Q 10 6	♣ A J 10 7 4	♣ A K 8 5 2	♣ A K 8 4 3

5. A REBID OF TWO IN THE SAME SUIT

1. *Opener*	*Responder*	2. *Opener*	*Responder*
1 ♥	2 ♣	1 ♥	1 ♠ or 1 N T
2 ♥		2 ♥	

The rebid shows: When it does not raise the bidding level, as in Figure 1, the opener's rebid in the same suit may not show any

values either in honour-tricks or in distribution above a minimum opening bid. It affirms only a rebiddable heart suit, and at times this requirement is shaded to include a suit such as A J x x x or K Q x x x.

When the rebid raises the bidding level, as in Figure 2, it means that the opener has either:

(*a*) A six-card trump suit.

(*b*) Unbalanced distribution with a five-card rebiddable suit; or

(*c*) About one additional honour-trick. Examples:

With ♠ 6 3 ♥ A K J 8 5 ♦ K J 6 ♣ 5 3 2 bid two hearts over two clubs; bid one no-trump over one spade; pass one no-trump.

With ♠ 6 5 ♥ J 10 8 6 4 2 ♦ A K 6 ♣ K J bid two hearts in either Figure 1 or Figure 2.

With ♠ 6 5 ♥ A Q 10 7 4 ♦ A K 5 ♣ J 7 3 bid two hearts in either Figure 1 or Figure 2.

With ♠ 5 ♥ A K 10 7 3 ♦ Q 10 9 4 ♣ Q 8 3 bid two hearts in either Figure 1 or Figure 2.

6. RAISE OF RESPONDER'S SUIT TO TWO

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♣	1 ♥
2 ♥	

The rebid shows: Adequate trump support for hearts, and

(*a*) Four trumps, in which case the hand need contain no added values either in honour-tricks or in distribution;

(*b*) Three trumps with a singleton or an additional ½ honour-trick.

Examples:

♠ 6 3	♠ 9 6 4 2	♠ K 8 5	♠ 8
♥ 10 7 5 4	♥ K 6 5	♥ A 6 3	♥ Q 5 2
♦ A 5	♦ A 3	♦ 7 2	♦ A K 6 4
♣ A Q 10 6 4	♣ A K 7 5	♣ K Q J 5 2	♣ K 8 5 3 2

II. FREE REBIDS (SOME ADDED VALUES)

1. NON-JUMP REBID OF TWO NO-TRUMP

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♥	2 ♣
2 N T	

The rebid shows: 3½ or more honour-tricks. Balanced distribu-

tion with probably a stopper or near stopper (Q x or J x x) in both unbid suits. Often as much as 4 or 4½ *bare* honour-tricks. With strong intermediates and a stopper in every suit opener may make this rebid with only 3 or 3-plus honour-tricks. Opener does not deny a five-card rebiddable heart suit or adequate trump support for clubs. Examples:

♠ 9 6 5 2	♠ A 6 5	♠ K 6	♠ A 6
♥ A Q 10 3	♥ K Q 10 8	♥ A K Q 5 4	♥ A J 8 5
♦ A K 6	♦ 9 6 4 2	♦ J 8 3	♦ K 10 7 3
♣ 5 3	♣ A Q	♣ K 9 4	♣ Q 10 9

2. SINGLE JUMP REBID IN NO-TRUMP

1. Opener	*Responder*	*2. Opener*	*Responder*
1 ♦	1 ♥	1 ♥	2 ♣
2 N T		3 N T	

The rebid shows: At least four honour-tricks with strong intermediates, probably 4½ honour-tricks, and a stopper (usually a double stopper) in both unbid suits. Balanced distribution. *In Figure 1*: Perhaps adequate support for hearts, but not four hearts (with which a double raise would be made). Opener probably has no biddable spade suit or he would have bid one spade. *In Figure 2:* Opener may have only four honour-tricks, but A Q x, K Q x, etc., in clubs. Examples:

In Figure 1		*In Figure 2*	
♠ K Q 6	♠ A 2	♠ A Q 6	♠ A 4
♥ Q 9	♥ A 6 3	♥ A J 10 6	♥ K J 7 2
♦ A K 8 4	♦ A Q J 6 3	♦ A K 7 4	♦ A 9 5 4
♣ K J 10 5	♣ K J 7	♣ J 10	♣ A Q 7

3. SINGLE RAISE OF A ONE NO-TRUMP TAKE-OUT

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♠	1 N T
2 N T	

The rebid shows: 4½ honour-tricks. Balanced distribution with some strength (probably a stopper) in every suit. With only four honour-tricks, opener should have strong fillers. He may have a rebiddable spade suit or a second biddable suit, being *too strong* to bid the suit: Examples:

♠ K Q 6 5	♠ A Q J 7	♠ Q J 10 9 7
♥ K Q	♥ A 2	♥ J 10 6
♦ A 10 8 5	♦ A K 6	♦ A K
♣ K Q J	♣ 10 8 4 3	♣ A Q J

4. RAISE OF RESPONDER'S SUIT TO THREE

1. Opener	*Responder*	*2. Opener*	*Responder*
1 ♠	2 ♣	1 ♠	2 ♥
3 ♣		3 ♥	

The rebid shows: Adequate trump support. With only three trumps the hand must contain an added ½ honour-trick. With four trumps, no added honour-tricks required. Since the response of two in a suit usually shows a five-card suit, opener may at times shade adequate trump support to J x x.

Bid three clubs with:		*Bid three hearts with:*	
♠ K Q J 6	♠ A J 8 5 4	♠ A Q 8 4 2	♠ K Q 9 6
♥ A 8 5 2	♥ A Q 2	♥ 9 6 4 3	♥ K 9 7
♦ 4 3	♦ 5	♦ A Q	♦ A K 8 5
♣ A 9 7	♣ J 9 7 4	♣ 6 3	♣ 7 3

5. DOUBLE RAISE IN RESPONDER'S SUIT

1. Opener	*Responder*	*2. Opener*	*Responder*
1 ♦	1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥
3 ♥		4 ♥	

The rebid shows: Four trumps, a singleton and about one additional honour-trick. With no singleton, the hand should contain at least four honour-tricks. The take-out of two may be raised to game with only three trumps if very strong (K Q x, A J x, etc.). On many hands which justify a double raise consider.

Raise one heart to three hearts with:		*Raise two hearts to four hearts with:*	
♠ 9	♠ A 6	♠ K Q J 5 3	♠ K Q 5 4 3
♥ Q 10 6 5	♥ K Q 8 5	♥ 10 9 5 2	♥ A Q 7
♦ A K J 3	♦ A K 7 5 2	♦ A K 6	♦ 10 9 6 5
♣ A J 5 2	♣ 6 3	♣ 5	♣ A

Note: A minor-suit response should not be raised to four, passing the three no-trump level, except with freak distribution (usually

five trumps) and four honour-tricks. *Note 2:* A double raise from one to three may be given in a major or minor with only three trumps (A J x or K Q x) when one suit is too weak to bid two no-trump.

6. REBID OF TWO IN A SUIT HIGHER RANKING THAN OPENER'S FIRST SUIT

Opener	*Responder*		*Opener*	*Responder*	*Opener*	*Responder*
1 ♦	1 ♠	or	1 ♦	1 N T or	1 ♦	2 ♣
2 ♥			2 ♥		2 ♥	

The rebid shows: A four-card heart suit and a five-card diamond suit. Usually at least four honour-tricks, or 3½ honour-tricks with both suits strong in intermediates. With 6-5 distribution no added honour-trick is required. With 5-5 distribution, including an unbiddable five-card heart suit, only three honour-tricks are required.

Examples:

♠ 6 3	♠ 7	♠ 6	♠ A Q
♥ A Q 10 5	♥ A Q J 10	♥ K 10 8 6 5	♥ 9 8 7 5 2
♦ K Q J 6 2	♦ A K J 9 6	♦ A K 9 7 5 3	♦ A K Q 6 5
♣ A 7	♣ 10 4 3	♣ 2	♣ 4

With ♠ 6 ♥ K J 6 2 ♦ A Q 10 5 4 ♣ K J 6 (three honour-tricks) opener would bid two hearts over a take-out of two clubs, knowing that a safe final contract is available in clubs if responder cannot support hearts or diamonds.

7. NON-JUMP REBID OF THREE IN A NEW SUIT (FORCING FOR ONE ROUND)

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♠	2 ♦
3 ♣	

The rebid shows: About four honour-tricks except with two five-card suits (in which case 3 to 3½ honour-tricks are sufficient) or with strong support for responder's suit. Examples:

♠ A 6	♠ 9	♠ K 2	♠ 4
♥ K Q 10 5 4	♥ A Q 10 3	♥ A J 8 6 4	♥ K 10 8 5 3 2
♦ Q 6	♦ Q J 5 2	♦ 9	♦ 2
♣ A K 5 3	♣ A Q 7 4	♣ A Q J 7 4	♣ A K 7 5 3

III. VERY STRONG REBIDS

1. JUMP REBID OF THREE NO-TRUMP

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♣	1 ♦
3 N T	

The rebid shows: About five honour-tricks, with at least one stopper (Q 10 x or better) and usually a double stopper (K J x, Q 10 x x, etc.) in both unbid suits. Examples:

♠ K 4	♠ Q J 5
♥ A K 7	♥ K Q 7
♦ Q 10 5 3	♦ A K 6
♣ A K 7 5	♣ A 10 9 6 2

2. JUMP REBID IN OPENER'S ORIGINAL SUIT

Opener	*Responder*	or	*Opener*	*Responder*	or	*Opener*	*Responder*
1 ♥	1 ♠		1 ♥	1 N T		1 ♥	2 ♣
3 ♥			3 ♥			3 ♥	

The rebid shows: With a strong five-card rebiddable suit (A K x x x, K Q J x x, etc.) five honour-tricks. With a strong six-card suit (A K x x x x, A Q 10 x x x, etc.) 4-4½ honour-tricks. With a seven-card suit, 3½ honour-tricks, sometimes only three honour-tricks. This is not a forcing bid, but responder is expected to bid again with about 1-plus honour-trick, or with a singleton and two or three trumps. Examples:

♠ K 6	♠ 9 4	♠ K Q
♥ A K J 9 3	♥ A Q J 7 6 5	♥ K Q 10 7 6 5 2
♦ A K Q	♦ K Q 7	♦ A 9 8
♣ 8 5 3	♣ A Q	♣ 2

3. JUMP RAISE OF A ONE NO-TRUMP TAKE-OUT

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♥	1 N T
3 N T	

The rebid shows: Five honour-tricks with a stopper in every suit. The hand should contain some added strength in fillers. Examples:

♠ J 10 6 3	♠ A K
♥ A K 8 2	♥ Q J 10 5
♦ A K 6	♦ K Q J
♣ A 5	♣ A 7 6 2

4. JUMP REBID IN A NEW SUIT (FORCING TO GAME)

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♥	1 N T, 1 ♠ or 2 ♣
3 ♦	

The rebid shows: Five honour-tricks with two biddable suits. Either great playing strength in opener's own suits or strong support for partner's suit. Since this rebid is forcing to game, opener should be sure of winning eight or nine tricks even opposite a shaded response. Examples:

♠ 6	♠ A 6	♠ Q 2
♥ A K J 7 4	♥ K Q J 5	♥ A K J 7 6 4
♦ A Q J 6 5	♦ A K 8 2	♦ A K Q 5
♣ K Q	♣ K 7 3	♣ 6

5. RAISE OF PARTNER'S SUIT FROM ONE TO FOUR

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♦	1 ♠
4 ♠	

The rebid shows: Powerful spade support (such as K J x x) with about 4½ honour-tricks. This bid is not often used because any hand so strong offers slam possibilities and a forcing rebid is usually preferable. Opener would, however, raise to four spades as in the bidding above, holding ♠ Q J 10 6 ♥ K Q ♦ A K Q 7 5 ♣ K 7, because, lacking the important suit controls, he cannot expect a slam unless responder can make a four no-trump bid.

CHAPTER XX

THE INTERMEDIATE ZONE

The intermediate zone of bidding is the keystone which holds up both the opening zone (one-bids and responses) and the end zone (game and slam bids). Unless the intermediate zone can be properly handled, correctness in opening bids is futile; and scientific slam methods lose accuracy because they are based on insecure premises.

The fact that books as well as players have under-emphasized the intermediate zone almost to its complete exclusion, is one of the laughable weaknesses of Bridge literature.

A player becomes a winner when he is able to find the answer to these two questions which occur in nearly all hands:

1. *When* to bid game—that is, will the combined hands win enough tricks?

2. *Where* to bid game—assuming that game is biddable, should the contract be in no-trump or in a suit? If in a suit, what is the best trump suit?

Indispensable to the reasoning which leads to either decision is the partnership factor. Rarely can a bidder decide either *when* or *where* without knowing pretty well what his partner has. For example:

♠ A K Q J 8 7 5 ♥ 4 ♦ K J 10 9 ♣ 6

This is an exceptional hand on which a player may decide entirely on his own responsibility to bid four spades; especially so if his partner has passed, ruling out slam possibilities. But

1. ♠ A K 7 5 ♥ A K 8 3 ♦ A K Q 10 ♣ 6
2. ♠ Q J 9 8 6 5 3 ♥ K 8 3 ♦ 7 2 ♣ 10

On Hand No. 1, the question *when* is answered, for game should be bid; but *where* can be answered only after learning something about partner's distribution. On Hand No. 2, the apparent desirability of playing the hand in spades may answer the *where* question, but whether or not to bid game

can be decided only when partner's bidding has revealed his general strength.

The ability to decide close questions in the intermediate zone depends upon an understanding of the meanings of partner's bids. Every bid in this zone should give some information about general strength and distribution. It follows that if a player can read his partner's bids, he also knows enough to make properly informative bids himself.

To bid correctly in the intermediate zone, and to understand correct bids made by his partner in this zone, the reader should acquire a full grasp of the bidding philosophy which may be divided broadly under the following three headings:

1. Valuation of the combined hands, including knowledge of what, roughly, is required to make a game at no-trump and a game in a suit.

2. What constitutes a safe, and what constitutes an unsafe contract.

3. The principle that every bid must have a purpose. The greatest weakness of the average player is that he does not try to get under the surface of the bid, and determine what was his partner's reason for making it. This is one of the most fascinating studies in Contract.

HAND VALUATION

A rough idea of the trick expectancy of two hands may be had from the valuation methods already explained (pages 44–61). The honour-trick table, the distributional count, the Rule of Eight and the 4 5 6 table are as good a formula as I have seen. Better than any formula is plastic valuation (Chapter XXX).

The 4 5 6 table is a good guide because it is easy to remember, and because a fair knowledge of the bidding system will let you know, every time partner makes an opening bid or a response, about how many honour-tricks he has (at the least). After that, you need only remember that with no available major suit in which to play the hand, you will need about six honour-tricks to make game. With a fair fit in a major suit, nothing exceptional, game on 5½ honour-

tricks is quite likely. With a very fine fit in a major suit, five honour-tricks should be enough, and often 4½.

On this basis may the player classify his hand in one of the zones of bidding. In the following examples, remember that only the *hand patterns* of possible North hands are shown. The 'x's', which usually represent very small cards, are used only to show the number of cards in the suit, whether high or low.

South	North	1.	2.	3.
1 ♥	1 ♠	♠ xxxx	♠ xxxxx	♠ xxxx
2 ♥		♥ xx	♥ xxx	♥ xxxx
		♦ xxxx	♦ x	♦ xxxx
		♣ xxx	♣ xxxx	♣ x

South has an opening bid and a rebiddable heart suit. Little more is known about his hand, except that he has at least 2½ honour-tricks, and may have as many as 3½ honour-tricks.

With Hand No. 1, North has only two hearts—no support. Hope of game lies in no-trump. If North sees a possibility of a combined holding of six honour-tricks, he is still in the intermediate zone and should try to make another bid, but if North sees no hope of the combined honour-trick total reaching six, he passes. That is, if North has about 2½ honour-tricks, he says to himself, '*If* my partner has 3½ honour-tricks we may make game, and on the chance that he has I will keep the bidding open once more.'

With Hand No. 2, North has fair support for a rebid suit. He will bid again if he sees a good chance of there being 5½ honour-tricks or thereabouts in the combined hands.

With Hand No. 3, North has very good support for hearts. With about 1½ honour-tricks in his hand he will bid again, for there may be a game if South has 3 to 3½ honour-tricks.

When there is trump support, the count of winners is equally accurate, even more so, but many players do not like to count higher than two. For them, let honour-tricks and distribution suffice.

RELATION OF NO-TRUMP TO TRUMP CONTRACTS

It may be accepted as a safe hypothesis that when a partnership can find some fair sort of trump fit, the same number

of honour-tricks will produce one trick more at a trump than at a no-trump contract.

This being so, it follows that a final contract of two in a suit is no more of an undertaking than a contract of one no-trump. Further, it follows that any bid of two no-trump is equivalent to a bid of three in a suit, showing about the same amount of strength because the two contracts are equally difficult to fulfil.

Remember this relation of no-trump to trump contracts. It has a powerful bearing on the entire philosophy of bidding.

SAFE AND UNSAFE HANDS

To distinguish between weak bids and strong bids is perhaps the most difficult thing in bidding for the average player. This should not be so. Self-preservation is at the back of every Bridge player's mind. When he bids, the safety factor is, or should be, the first thing he thinks about.

I will have more to say on this subject in the chapter on The Safety Factor, but remember this: Every time you bid you take a chance. Maybe you will be doubled and set. If you take this chance without some hope of commensurate gain, you are a sucker.

To illustrate this rude statement, suppose your partner at some stage of the auction makes a bid of two no-trump. And suppose he realizes that if things go wrong, he can go down about 500 points. Is he taking a 500-point risk to make a score of 70 points for two no-trump? Of course not. He takes the chance of losing 500 points because he thinks that there is hope of reaching and making game, whereby he will make 500 points. What inference can you then draw when your partner bids two no-trump? Why, that he has strength of such extent that he has reason to believe a game is possible. Two no-trump, then, must be strong bid. Even if you did not know, from reading the requirements, how much strength the bid shows, you could figure it out by pure logic.

The risk one accepts in bidding is greater on some hands than on others, regardless of honour-trick content, because there are typical safe hands and typical unsafe hands.

A hand is *safe* when, whether or not the contract is made, it cannot be badly beaten by even a terrible break. A hand is unsafe when, if things go unexpectedly wrong, the contract can be defeated by four or five tricks.

It is seldom the high cards, Aces and Kings, in the hand which cause it to be safe or unsafe. High cards are only temporary barriers to the running of some long suit in the opponents' hands. Generally speaking, it is the combination of many trumps plus unbalanced distribution which forms a safe hand:

♠ K Q 8 6 3 2 ♥ 6 5 2 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ 7	N W E S	♠ J 9 7 5 4 ♥ 10 ♦ 9 8 7 5 ♣ J 8 3

This is a weak hand which must lose six tricks. At a four-spade contract it will go down three. But it is a safe hand because, whatever happens, it cannot go down more than three. Add a couple of Aces, say in hearts and clubs. Now the hand will go down only one at four spades. It probably cannot stop an opposing game in hearts, but it offers a cheap sacrifice with absolute safety. Now add the King of diamonds. There is a chance to make four spades. It may not be made, of course, but there is a chance. And if the chance fails, the risk is still negligible because the hand can go down only one. It is a typical safe hand.

An unsafe hand is typified by its short trumps or balanced distribution, or both.

♠ K Q 7 5 ♥ Q ♦ A Q 4 ♣ K J 9 7 4	N W E S	♠ 9 8 6 3 ♥ 7 6 3 2 ♦ 8 3 ♣ A 10 3

At a four-spade contract, this hand seems to have an excellent chance for game good enough to warrant the bid. But it is still an unsafe hand. Suppose the trumps break badly, with ♠ A J 10 x in North's hand. Suppose North has the King of diamonds, and West guesses badly on the location of the Queen of clubs. This hand may go down four or five tricks doubled at four spades. It probably will not. but anything *may* happen.

NO-TRUMP HANDS

With very few exceptions, no-trump hands may all be classified in the unsafe group. An unusually long suit, easily establishable, in an opponent's hand; together with an Ace or other sure entry card in a suit declarer must try to set up; these can pile up an impressive total of undertricks even when declarer's side has six honour-tricks or more.

About the only no-trump hand which falls into the safe group, barring times when the partners have a near monopoly on the high cards, is one which includes a long, positively solid suit and quick, sure stoppers in the other suits. For example:

♠ A 6 ♥ Q J 3 ♦ A K Q J 8 6 ♣ K Q

This hand is pretty sure to win eight tricks, cannot fail to get at least seven, and with any help from partner will go game. It may go game without help from partner if the opponents make the slightest defence slip. But weaken any one of the stoppers in side suits; make the clubs K J instead of K Q, or the hearts Q 10 x instead of Q J 3, and automatically the hand becomes unsafe at no-trump, for conceivably a suit of six or more cards could be run against it.

SHOWING PREFERENCE

It is the unsafe character of no-trump bids, and the general unsafeness of suit contracts with ill-fitting trump suits, which dictate the meanings of the sign-off and weakness-showing bids described on pages 194–5. The rush to get into a fairly safe trump suit also accounts for the obligation to *show preference*, as strong an obligation on a Bridge player as the forced response to an opening two-bid.

A sound bidder *must* understand preference bids and what they imply. He must equally recognize the necessity for them. Above all, he must realize that merely giving a preference places no responsibility on the responder.

When one partner has bid two suits, the other partner must show which one he prefers.[1] His choice will be made as follows:

[1] Unless conditions and the strength of his hand warrant his bidding another suit, or no-trump, in order to reach a contract he can consider superior to *either* of his partner's suits.

1. With equal length in each of partner's suits (as 3 and 3) he should usually prefer the first-bid suit, even though the second is stronger in high cards.

2. With greater length in one suit, he should prefer that suit, even though he has higher cards in the other. (He will prefer the suit in which he holds 6 5 4 to the suit in which he holds A Q.)

However, an exception is made when one of partner's suits is obviously only four cards in length—see page 233.

Preference is sometimes shown by bidding, and sometimes by passing, following these rules:

If you prefer partner's second-bid suit, and your hand is so weak that a pass is indicated, you show preference by passing; but

If you prefer partner's first-bid suit, even though your hand's weakness warrants passing, you do not pass. You return to partner's first-bid suit, at the lowest possible level. This is equivalent to passing.

Examples:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	

This is no stronger than

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	*Pass*	

North's apparent bid of two spades in the first example is not a bid at all. It means that North would have liked to pass, but he knows spades to be a better trump suit than hearts. He is not going to leave South to suffer in a bad heart trump suit, when he can just as easily return the contract to a satisfactory spade trump suit. *But if he had preferred hearts he would have passed.*

THE PREFERENCE RAISE

Therefore, when strong enough to raise one of partner's suits, it is not sufficient merely to show preference. Partner, knowing the bid may be equivalent to a pass, cannot be expected to read it as a raise.

The formula here is: Raise one trick if you prefer the second-bid suit; *jump* one trick if you prefer the first-bid suit.

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♠	

is the same as

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	

The first case only *seems* to be a jump raise. Like the second example, it represents an actual raise of only one trick, since a two-spade bid would be no bid at all.

EVERY BID HAS A PURPOSE

From the foregoing illustration, it is possible for the reader to see how the hidden meaning of a bid may be logically thought out, without benefit of conventions. North made a jump to three spades, yet South could tell that only a single raise was intended.

Every correct bid must be made with a purpose, and that purpose can be read without difficulty or effort, but only with a little understanding. It is easy to acquire this understanding because the purpose of any bid must be one of two things:

1. To get out of an unsafe contract (a dangerous no-trump or a bad suit fit) into a safer contract, though with no desire to increase the level of the bidding.

2. To get to a higher contract, in the belief that the important bonuses attending game or slam bids can be won.

If partner's last bid was made for purpose No. 1, be cautious, proceed on your own responsibility. If purpose No. 2 prompted his bid, stretch your hand to the limit in order to go farther.

How do you tell the purpose of partner's bid? Partly by the bidding situation, and partly by the level at which it is made.

INFERENCES FROM THE BIDDING LEVEL

It is elementary that the bidding level alone cannot decide the strength or weakness shown by the bidder. A four-bid is sometimes stronger than a two-bid, sometimes weaker, depending on the circumstances in which it is made. There are, however, some cases in which the quantity of a bid is quite revealing.

Right or wrong, we play Bridge according to a system in which the opening bid, and the response to it, carry us to the two-odd, or eight-trick level. Our system of one-round-forcing bids creates a situation in which, when I bid one in a suit, I am inevitably obligating my side to win eight tricks. Provided my partner responds (which he will do on the nominal value of one honour-trick) we must reach one no-trump or two in a suit before we can stop. Remember, for trick-taking purposes one no-trump and a suit-contract of two are about the same.

Therefore, up to the stage of two in a suit, we are in the first phase of the bidding and all the bids are of an introductory nature, so incomplete in information as to be almost meaningless. Being forced to arrive at one no-trump or a two bid, the players may feel their way around, groping for a good trump suit, without definitely committing themselves on how much strength they have.

South	North
1 ♠	1 NT
2 ♦	

South's two-diamond bid may have been made on a hand of better than minimum strength, but again it may have been made simply because South, even with small strength and no game expectations, does not have distribution suitable to pass one no-trump safely.

In this phase of the auction, all bids are possible minimums. They may be made for safety as well as for constructive purposes, and it is difficult to tell which. There is no definite promise of strength beyond that which is required to open the bidding, and to respond once. The auction is still in its blind stages.

A non-jump rebid by either partner at the level of two is

not forcing. This is the time for the player to count up the trick-taking possibilities, and if no game is possible, even though partner have the maximum on which his bidding could have been based, to pass.

THE FIRST SIGN OF STRENGTH

The first really encouraging bid which may be made by either partner is a bid of three-odd in a suit *or its equivalent.*

Such a bid is not only a possible sign of strength, but a *sure sign.* If the combined hands are hopelessly in the part-score zone, one of the partners should have found it out during the first phase of bidding, and passed safely at a one-no-trump or suit contract of two.

Even if a reasonably safe contract cannot be found without getting up to a three-bid, it is better to play at an unsafe contract but at a lower level:

♠ 7 3 ♥ A Q 8 6 4 ♦ 6 ♣ A Q 8 6 4

South holds this hand and bids one heart. North responds two diamonds. South *does not* bid three clubs. He would be risking a higher contract only for a hope (not an assurance) of finding a better fit in clubs. North may prefer hearts to clubs; why get up too high? South's rebid is two hearts.

♠ 7 3 ♥ A Q 8 6 4 ♦ 4 ♣ A Q 8 6 4

South bids one heart, but this time North's response is one spade. This time, South shows his clubs, for he can do so at the two-odd level. This does not represent an increase in the contract for the only available rebid of one-odd—one no-trump—would be much less safe than a contract of two in a suit.

Any time a player accepts the risk of a three-bid, he shows strength. Without strength, he would crawl into his sanctuary at the two level. Therefore any three-bid is a game try, for there would be no sense in showing strength except to inform partner that game is welcome.

EQUIVALENT BIDS

I mentioned a bid of three in a suit 'or its equivalent'. The first equivalent bid that springs to mind is any bid of two no-trump, two no-trump being as hard to make as three with a trump suit.

That accounts for the vast difference between these two bidding situations:

1. South	North	2. South	North
1 ♦	1 ♠	1 ♦	2 ♣
1 NT		2 NT	

In Example 1, South's one-no-trump rebid promises no strength beyond his opening bid. In fact, the rebid is distinctly discouraging, because in addition to having perhaps no added honour-tricks, South has no unusual suit-lengths to show.

In Example 2, South's rebid of two no-trump proclaims a strong hand and a desire to reach game if North has any fair amount of strength. The two-no-trump rebid is equivalent to a suit-bid of three, and why should South push his side up to the three-level if he has no hope of game?

Millions of players used to consider the two-no-trump rebid a minimum or sign-off rebid, as is the one-no-trump rebid. Sad experience, I fear, rather than anything I wrote, taught them to change their minds. The practice of making two-no-trump rebids on minimum hands brought them too many big penalty losses.

REVERSE BIDDING

Reverse bidding, the mechanics of which is explained on page 226, is a term which has done no good for Bridge. The average player, listening to the ballyhoo of writers and lecturers, has come to think it something mysterious. Actually, it is only another example of an equivalent to a bid of three in a suit.

South	North
1 ♦	1 NT
2 ♠	

Of course South bid only two spades. He did not bid three. But suppose North has:

♠ 6 2 ♥ K J 3 ♦ 10 7 4 ♣ Q 8 6 4 2

South does not want to be left to suffer, with two little spades as trump support in North's hand. The diamond suit will be much better, and South naturally wants North to show preference and return to three diamonds.

South must have bid two spades in full knowledge that if

North were weak in spades and stronger in diamonds, the contract would become three diamonds. So by his two-spade bid South was reaching up into the level of three-odd all by himself. This being a strong bid, it requires a strong hand. (Requirements are outlined on page 213.)

RAISES AT THE THREE LEVEL

There is even a decided difference between these two cases:

1. South	North	2. South	North
1 ♥	1 ♠	1 ♥	2 ♦
2 ♠		3 ♦	

North's response in each case was forcing, so South had to find some rebid. In Example 1, South makes only a nominal rebid. He promises no extra strength, but does say that, while keeping the bidding at its irreducible level, he thinks a spade contract safer than a minimum contract in no-trump or some other suit. In Example 2, however, South is making a strong bid. He has available a non-forcing, possible minimum rebid (two hearts). This would permit the bidding to die in its first phase. Instead, South deliberately pushes up one trick higher.

If it be argued that South may not have a rebiddable suit, and therefore cannot bid two hearts, I answer that South should have thought of that before. I refer the reader to the Principle of Preparedness in Chapter XI, and particularly to the footnote on page 131.

GUIDING THE BIDDING

The only direct game-tries are bids at the three level. The truth of this statement will become obvious when you consider that anything lower has already been classified in the minimum zone; anything higher *is* game.

But there are times when a furtive try for game may be made even at what is ordinarily the minimum zone, when the bidder thinks there is bare hope of getting somewhere, but is not confident enough to risk getting too high.

This bare hope arises from the fact that in such situations as the following, the information given by South is very indefinite, so that North is uncertain as to how far he can safely go:

1. South	North	2. South	North
1 ♥	1 ♠	1 ♥	1 ♠
2 ♣		2 ♥	

In Example 1, South may have just under the strength he would require for a strong bid such as two no-trump or three hearts. The same is true in Example 2. South's rebid is not forcing in either case, but North may have just enough to want to hear more, yet not enough to encourage a game on his own hook:

Example 1. North may hold ♠ A Q 7 3 ♥ J 2 ♦ Q 10 7 6 ♣ 8 6 3. North cannot risk two no-trump, for an unmakeable contract could be reached if South were weak. North therefore marks time by bidding two diamonds. If South is weak he can pass, return to two spades, or bid two hearts, whichever his hand favours. If South had a maximum two-club rebid, he now bids two no-trump and North gladly raises to game.

Example 2. North may hold ♠ K Q 8 6 4 ♥ Q 3 ♦ K 9 6 ♣ 8 6 3. Too weak to raise hearts or bid two no-trump, North yet sees where game can be made if South has just under a three-heart rebid. North bids two spades, giving South a chance to make another bid, without promising a great deal from his own hand.

These bids were made to keep the bidding alive a while longer, and note that South will not consider them rescue bids. It is not necessary to rescue partner from a suit he has rebid, nor when he has shown two biddable suits. In such situations any bid by partner shows genuine rebid values.

In other cases a player has the opposite object: He wants to make a strength-showing bid, while the logical rebid on his hand would not sound strong enough:

1. ♠ A K J 6 5 ♥ Q 7 3 ♦ A 10 5 ♣ Q 10
2. ♠ A K Q 6 5 ♥ Q 6 5 ♦ 8 3 ♣ A J 6

In each case the player bid one spade and his partner responded two clubs. With Hand 1, the logical rebid is two spades, but it does not actually reveal the full strength of the hand. The best rebid is two no-trump, which is more likely to encourage partner, on a borderline hand, to keep going.

On Hand 2, a two-no-trump rebid is not advisable because of the weakness in both the heart and diamond suits, but again two spades sounds too weak and the proper rebid is three clubs, raising partner's suit, and, by getting into the higher reaches of the bidding, encouraging partner to try for game if he has any added values.

WHERE TO BID GAME

Usually, if a strong major suit is available in the combined hands, and if the partners' strength makes a game contract proper, they should bid game in the major suit.

If no major-suit game is available, game should usually be bid in no-trump, where only nine tricks are needed, despite the fact that a strong minor suit may be available. The minor suit will furnish tricks for no-trump, and if game were to be attempted with a minor trump suit, eleven tricks would be required.

WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE A NO-TRUMP GAME

It is quite easy to say that six honour-tricks in the combined hands will produce a no-trump game, but it is possible to gauge the no-trump game possibilities of a hand much more accurately if other factors are taken into consideration. After all, the object is to win nine tricks, and sometimes six honour-tricks will not do it, while at other times fewer honour-tricks suffice.

In good no-trump bidding, the following qualities of the hand are important:

1. Balanced distribution of suits and honour-cards.
2. Six honour-tricks, or a strong suit of five cards or more.

Mention of the strong suit is important, for a no-trump bid of two or three is particularly unsafe if the bidder has no idea where his tricks are coming from. The strong suit being present, however, both the distributional and honour-trick requirements can be somewhat modified.

A no-trump hand really should have some strength in every suit. By strength I do not mean a sure stopper. J x x, or 10 9 x, or four cards no matter how low, represent adequate protection in the no-trump bidder's weakest suit. Then, if partner has something like Q x x, there is a strong

probability that the opponents cannot run many tricks in that suit.

No-trump distribution is said to be 4-3-3-3, 4-4-3-2, 5-3-3-2, sometimes 6-3-2-2. Many games will be missed if a player never bids no-trump except on those distributions. I repeat that any one of the usual requirements may be modified if a strong suit, which can probably be run, is present:

South	North	*South holds:*
1 ♦	2 ♣	♠ A J 6
2 NT		♥ K 4 3
		♦ A K J 10 8 5
		♣ 7

South has unbalanced distribution; but the diamond suit has such a good chance of being established and run, and North's bid gives such promise of taking care of the club suit, that South bids two no-trump, trying for game, rather than rebid diamonds.

South	North	*South holds:*
1 ♠	2 ♦	♠ A Q 6 5
2 NT	3 ♦	♥ K 6
		♦ K Q 7
		♣ K 10 4 3

North's three-diamond bid is not encouraging (page 194). South can be quite sure that the combined hands probably hold no more than five honour-tricks. But North undoubtedly has a six-card diamond suit, which if headed by the Ace will produce six tricks at no-trump. South can take a chance on winning the three extra tricks. He bids three no-trump.

South	North	*North holds:*
1 ♦	1 ♠	♠ Q J 8 3
1 NT		♥ J 6 5
		♦ Q J
		♣ A 8 5 2

South has made a minimum rebid, and probably has only three honour-tricks. North's two honour-tricks offer a combined total of at most 5½. But North has some strength in every suit, plus two honours which promise that South can win several tricks with the diamond suit he has bid. North raises to two no-trump.

One thing for a player to keep in mind when striving for game, and finding himself in the intermediate zone, is this: If he seems to have a possible no-trump game, but it is going

to be close, the number of Aces held by the partnership is very important. Opponents' Aces are their sure re-entries. It takes time to knock them out and run the tricks consequently established. If there is only a hope of game at no-trump on a hand which contains no Ace, it is wiser to pass. Declarer and dummy between them, except on hands of extreme strength, should have at least two and preferably three of the four Aces to feel safe at three no-trump.

FINDING A MAJOR TRUMP SUIT

When the opening bid is in a major suit, and partner raises it, everything is very simple. The count of winners decides the close hands, while on many of them the first response is a double raise and game must be reached.

When the responding hand does not justify an immediate raise, the count of winners is often neither so accurate nor so easy to apply, for further information obtained in the course of the bidding may affect valuation of the hand.

South	North	*North holds:*
1 ♥	1 ♠	♠ A 9 7 6 3
2 ♥		♥ 8 6 5
		♦ 6
		♣ K 10 9 5

North can barely support a rebid suit. Count his winners and you find he has four; on the honour-trick basis, he can read the combined total as possibly only 4½ or so, without a very strong trump suit if South has only something like A K x x x. Yet South may have a maximum sort of two-heart rebid. Since there is a fair trump suit in the combined hands, though not necessarily a powerful one, North can take a chance on making another bid and raise to three hearts. This is about the minimum hand on which such a bid is proper. *Usually, if there are only 1½ honour-tricks, the trump holding should be Q x x even when the suit has been rebid.*

THE FOUR-CARD MAJOR

When a player's strength indicates that a game may be possible, but no good trump suit has been found, he should look around for a major suit, and should try to show even

a weak four-card major. Q 10 x x is strong enough, and sometimes *even a suit as weak as A x x x.*

Such a suit should be shown whenever the two-no-trump level has already been reached and game, either at no-trump or in a major, is sure to be arrived at finally. In such cases, a bid of three in such a major suit costs nothing, for the no-trump game can still be bid if the major suit does not fit in with partner's hand. Another case for showing such a weak four-card major is when the player is desirous, in trying for game, to make another bid, and when his major suit can surely be recognized by partner as being only four cards in length.

A bid suit can be read as a four-card length when the same player has previously bid some lower-ranking suit. That is, when a player *reverses*, he implies that he has only four cards of the second-bid suit.

One of the most nearly inviolable safety rules in the game is not to support a four-card suit without at least four trumps in support. A three-card holding, even as strong as A K x, will not do.

But when holding four cards in support of a major suit bid by partner, that major suit will probably be the best spot in which to play the hand for game.

Here is how two partners feel their way into a major-suit game:

♠ J 7 4 3 ♥ A 5 ♦ A K 8 4 3 ♣ Q 3	N W E S	♠ Q 10 7 6 ♥ K J 7 6 2 ♦ Q 8 ♣ A 5
West 1 ♦ 2 ♦ 3 ♠		East 1 ♥ 2 ♠ 4 ♠

East, with 2½ honour-tricks and an honour in West's diamond suit, relished the idea of game. With his distributed strength a no-trump game seemed the probable place for the hand, but first he investigated the possibilities in spades. Note that East's two-spade bid, a reverse bid, shows strength for it would force West to the three level to show preference.

West, having four trumps, raised spades and a four-spade contract was bid and made. At no-trump the opponents might very likely have established a club suit on the opening lead, and defeated the contract before East could find nine tricks.

Showing preference when partner has bid two suits, of which the second is obviously only a four-card suit, sometimes requires going one trick higher to show preference for the first-bid, probably longer suit. This is usually done with the same number of cards in each suit, but sometimes with very weak hands the rule (page 222) is violated:

♠ J 6 5 ♥ K 8 6 5 ♦ J 6 3 ♣ 10 8 7

The opening bid was one diamond, to which this hand made a one-no-trump response (this is the minimum hand on which such a response should be made). Now the opener makes a rebid of two spades. He has only a four-card suit, but nevertheless it is quite proper to pass this hand. The bid is not forcing, and a three-diamond contract should be not more than one trick better than a two-spade contract, with more danger of being doubled.

WHEN THE ZONE CHANGES

This chapter has purposely been devoted only to bids which, though encouraging, are not forcing. When a player tries for game, if he is sure that a game should be bid he may protect himself against being prematurely dropped by making bids which force partner to keep the bidding open. Few Bridge table wails are sillier than the one that goes, 'Oh, partner, I didn't think you would drop me!' Maybe 'partner' was quite right to stop bidding. It is dangerous, and unfair to partner, to put the strain of bidding game on him if added strength in his hand is not really necessary.

South	North	*North holds:*
1 ♦	1 ♠	♠ A Q 6 3
2 ♥		♥ Q 8 5 4
		♦ 4 3
		♣ Q 6 3

South, by his reverse bid, has shown a strong hand, has encouraged a game contract, and has promised about four honour-tricks. North, seeing a fit in a major suit and a combined honour-trick

count which is more than enough for game, has no reason to hesitate longer. He should next bid not three hearts, but four hearts.

South	North	*North holds:*
1 ♠	2 ♠	♠ 8 6 5 3
3 ♣		♥ 6 2
		♦ A Q 10 4
		♣ 8 3 2

If North bid only three spades now it would be a simple preference bid, and, in addition, a sign-off (page 194). North had full values and more for a single raise, not a shaded raise. South is encouraging a game, and North's hand justifies accepting. North should jump to four spades.

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	2 ♥
2 ♠	Pass		

North holds ♠ Q 5 2 ♥ 5 3 ♦ A 10 5 ♣ K Q 10 6 2. He should not bid three spades, but should jump to four spades. This is one of the most mis-bid situations in Contract Bridge. South by making a free rebid (Chapter XVII) has shown values in excess of his opening bid, and has promised a rebiddable suit. North does not want to stop short of game, so he should not merely raise to three spades and put on South the burden of deciding whether to go on or not.

The governing principle here is this: When a player makes a bid which is encouraging but not forcing, he tells his partner to go farther with anything more than has been guaranteed by previous bids, but to pass if his previous bids showed everything that he had. Sometimes bids are stretched and purport to show even a little more than the bidder actually has. In such cases, merely inviting him to bid game will get no response from him.

GUIDE TO GAME VALUATION

Here is a very rough guide, in terms of honour-tricks, for judging when partner's game invitation should be accepted; and for deciding when to invite game yourself:

OPENING HAND

If partner makes a forcing bid:
BID. You have no choice.

If partner makes a three-level bid:
REBID with about 3-plus honour-tricks. Otherwise pass.

If partner makes a non-forcing jump bid:
REBID with about 2½-plus honour-tricks, or with support.

If partner makes a possible minimum bid:
REBID with about 3½ honour-tricks, or with strong trump support.

RESPONDING HAND

If partner makes a forcing bid:
BID. You have no choice.

If partner makes a three-level bid:
REBID with about 1½ honour-tricks if your first response was 1 NT or a one-over-one; but if your first response was two of a suit, you need about 2-plus honour-tricks.

If partner makes a non-forcing jump bid:
REBID with about 1-plus honour-trick, or with trump support.

If partner makes a possible minimum bid:
REBID with more than 2½ honour-tricks, or with 1½–2 honour-tricks and strong trump support.

RESPONSES TO REBIDS

By Opening and Responding Hands

ILLUSTRATED SUMMARY

In this illustrated summary are given examples of hands on which various kinds of game-tries may be made. It serves two purposes: First, it is handy for reference when the requirements for some specific bid are desired. Second, it provides the case method of instruction for those who prefer not to learn the general principles governing a group of bids, and then apply the principles themselves.

Two things should be kept in mind: First, the requirements for the opener's first rebid are explained in Chapter XIX and illustrated on pages 208 to 215. Second, the term 'added values' has a different meaning when applied to the responding hand than when applied to the opening hand. The opener is assumed to have about 3 honour-tricks; he has additional strength, justifying further strong bidding, only with 3½ to 5 honour-tricks. The responder is assumed, after his first response, to have only about 1 honour-trick. Additional strength, justifying further strong bidding, for the responder is anything from 1½ honour-tricks up, depending upon whether he has good distribution (with a strong suit of his own, or support for partner's suit) or balanced distribution, in which case 2 or 2½ honour-tricks should be considered a strong holding.

GAME-TRIES BY THE RESPONDER

(*Responses to any forcing or jump bid are not included*)

When I point out what certain bids mean in terms of honour-tricks, it must be understood that such figures can be only approximate. Distributional changes in a hand, for better or worse, act as a compensating factor. Hence '3½ honour-tricks' may mean '3 honour-tricks with good distribution'.

I. AFTER ONE-OVER-ONE RESPONSES

1. South	West	North	East	
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	South has balanced distribution and about 3 honour-tricks.
1 NT	Pass			

North should:

1. Pass with 1 honour-trick or less.
2. Bid a new biddable suit with 2 honour-tricks.
3. Rebid a rebiddable suit with 2 honour-tricks.
4. Bid two no-trump with more than 2 honour-tricks.

Pass	*Bid 2 ♣*	*Bid 2 ♠*	*Bid 2 NT*
♠ Q J 8 6 4	♠ A 8 6 4 3	♠ K Q J 8 6	♠ K J 4 3
♥ K 6 3	♥ 7 5	♥ K 9 4	♥ Q 6
♦ 7 3	♦ 8 3	♦ 6 3	♦ 7 6 3
♣ 8 5 4	♣ K Q 8 4	♣ 8 4 2	♣ A 10 4 2

2.

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♣	Pass		

South has about 3½ honour-tricks or the equivalent in good distribution.

North should:

1. Pass or show preference with 1 honour-trick or less.
2. Rebid a suit, raise diamonds or clubs, or bid two no-trump with 2–2½ honour-tricks.

Bid 2 ♦	*Bid 2 ♠*	*Bid 2 NT*	*Bid 3 ♣*
♠ Q J 10 8 6	♠ A Q 8 6 4	♠ A Q 10 8	♠ Q 10 8 6 3
♥ K 4 3	♥ 9 3	♥ K 6 4 2	♥ 10 8 4
♦ 10 8 7	♦ K 10 6	♦ J 3	♦ K 7
♣ 9 4	♣ 8 6 3	♣ 9 7 4	♣ A J 6

3.

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♦	Pass		

South has about 3 honour-tricks, or its equivalent, with a rebiddable suit.

North should:

1. Bid two no-trump with about 2 honour-tricks including Q J, Q x x or better in diamonds, and Q x, J x x or better in both hearts and clubs.
2. Otherwise, bid as above.

Pass	*Bid 2 ♠*	*Bid 2 ♥*	*Bid 2 NT*
♠ A J 8 6 3	♠ A Q 10 6 4	♠ A 8 6 5 2	♠ Q 10 8 3
♥ Q 5 4	♥ K 6 3	♥ K 7 5 3 2	♥ Q J 4
♦ 8 6 8	♦ 9 2	♦ 9 6	♦ A 6 2
♣ 7 6 3	♣ 10 7 4	♣ 5	♣ J 10 8 6

4. South	West	North	East	
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	South has a strong hand with 4 or more honour-tricks. He probably has only 4 hearts.
2 ♥	Pass			

North should:

1. Pass or show preference with less than 1-plus honour-tricks.

2. Bid or raise with 1½ honour-tricks or more. A raise requires four hearts. A minimum no-trump bid requires Q 10 x or better in clubs. With more than 2 honour-tricks, jump to game.

Bid 3 ♦	*Bid 2 NT*	*Bid 3 ♥*	*Bid 4 ♥*
♠ K 9 6 5 3	♠ K J 9 2	♠ K J 9 2	♠ K J 9 2
♥ 8 6 2	♥ Q 6	♥ 9 6 5 3	♥ Q 9 5 3
♦ 8 6 2	♦ 7 5 3	♦ 7 6	♦ 7 6
♣ K 4	♣ Q J 6 2	♣ K 6 2	♣ A 6 2

II. AFTER TWO-OF-A-SUIT RESPONSES

1. South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass	South has a rebiddable suit, but perhaps only 2½ honour-tricks; perhaps nearly 4 honour-tricks.
2 ♥	Pass			

North should:

1. Pass with less than 2 honour-tricks, unless able to raise because of distribution.

2. Raise with 4 winners; but if possible avoid raising with only Q x, K x or A x in hearts.

3. Bid two no-trump or a suit with 2½ honour-tricks.

Pass	*Bid 3 ♥*	*Bid 3 ♣*	*Bid 2 NT*
♠ 8 6	♠ 10 8 6 3	♠ 9 7	♠ Q 8 6 3
♥ 5 2	♥ 9 4 2	♥ J 5	♥ Q 2
♦ 9 7 2	♦ A	♦ Q 6 3	♦ J 9 5
♣ A Q 10 7 6 3	♣ K Q 8 6 4	♣ A K J 8 6 2	♣ A K J 3

2. South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass	South may have 3 to 3½ honour-tricks; but possibly only 2½ honour-tricks.
2 ♦	Pass			

North should:

1. Pass or show preference with less than 2 honour-tricks, unless able to raise hearts. It is futile to raise diamonds except with hope of a no-trump game, or with 6 winners or more.

2. Otherwise, bid as above.

Bid 2 ♥	*Bid 3 ♥*	*Bid 3 ♦*	*Bid 2 NT*
♠ 6 5 3	♠ A 6 4	♠ 8 6 3	♠ A K 6
♥ 8 6 2	♥ Q 7 3	♥ Q 2	♥ 5 4 2
♦ 7 4	♦ 4	♦ A 8 5 4	♦ 7 4
♣ A K 7 6 3	♣ K Q 10 6 5 2	♣ K Q J 6	♣ Q J 8 6 3

3.

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass	South has at least 3½ honour tricks, probably 4 or more
2 NT	Pass			

North should:

1. Bid three no-trump (or show a biddable spade suit) with 2-plus or more honour-tricks; or with 1½ honour-tricks and a six-card club suit.

2. Bid three hearts (forcing to game) with adequate support.

3. Bid three clubs with a six-card suit headed by 1 honour-trick, but less than 1½ honour-tricks in the hand.

4. Otherwise, pass.

Bid 3 NT	*Bid 3 ♠*	*Bid 3 ♥*	*Pass*
♠ A 6	♠ K 10 4 3	♠ 8 6 5	♠ Q 8 4
♥ 5 4 2	♥ A 6	♥ Q 7 5	♥ 7 3
♦ 7 3	♦ 5 4	♦ K 5	♦ 5 4 2
♣ K J 10 8 6 3	♣ A J 8 5 4	♣ A Q 8 6 2	♣ A Q J 6 2

4.

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♣	Pass	South has 3½ or more honour-tricks, with ♣ K J x or better, or with four clubs.
3 ♣	Pass			

North should:

1. Bid three no-trump (or show a spade suit, or show heart support) with 2 honour-tricks or more.

2. Pass (do not bid four or five clubs) if unable to make a major-suit or no-trump bid except with a very strong hand (3 or more honour-tricks).

Bid 3 NT	*Bid 3 ♥*	*Bid 5 ♣*	*Pass*
♠ A 5 2	♠ 10 9 6 3	♠ 6 3	♠ 6 3 2
♥ 8 6 4	♥ Q 7 2	♥ 4	♥ 7 5
♦ Q 7	♦ 8	♦ A 8 6	♦ 6 4
♣ K 9 8 6 3	♣ A Q J 6 5	♣ A Q 10 9 7 4 3	♣ K Q J 8 6 2

III. AFTER A ONE-NO-TRUMP RESPONSE

1. South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 NT	Pass	South has 3 honour-tricks; perhaps 2½ honour-tricks with a six-card suit; perhaps more.
2 ♥	Pass			

or

2. South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 NT	Pass	South probably has about 3½ honour-tricks, possibly more.
2 ♦	Pass			

North should:

1. Bid two no-trump with 2 honour-tricks including Q x, J 10, etc., in at least one of North's suits.
2. Otherwise, pass or show preference.

Bid 2 no-trump with ♠ K 10 3 ♥ 6 5 2 ♦ A 8 4 ♣ Q 9 8 5.

3. South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	1 NT	Pass	South has 4½ to 5 honour-tricks, with some strength in every suit.
2 NT	Pass			

North should bid three no-trump with 1-plus honour-trick or more; pass with less.

Bid 3 no-trump with ♠ Q 6 3 ♥ 7 2 ♦ A 8 6 3 ♣ J 5 4 3.

RESPONSES TO REBIDS

By the Opening Hand

In any of the bidding situations given below, the opener should usually *pass* if holding 3 honour-tricks or less; *bid* if holding 3½ honour-tricks or more.

1. South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 ♠	Pass

2. South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 ♦	Pass

3. South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 NT	Pass	2 NT	Pass

4. South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass

5. South	West	North	East	6. South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	3 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass	2 NT	Pass

7. South	West	North	East	8. South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass	1 ♥	Pass	1 NT	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	3 ♦	Pass	2 ♦	Pass	2 NT	Pass

The opener's rebid (it will be his second rebid) if he has 3½ honour-tricks to justify it, should be chosen as follows:

1. Bid no-trump with a stopper in every unbid suit, and preferably with balanced distribution.

2. Raise partner's suit with unbalanced distribution and adequate trump support.

3. Bid a biddable suit previously undisclosed.

CHAPTER XXI

THE DEFENDERS' BIDDING

A player who enters the bidding after one of his opponents has made an opening bid is called a defender. The defender enters the bidding for one of two reasons:

1. For defensive purposes: to conduct by judicious overbidding a kind of guerilla tactics with the object of intimidating the enemy; or, to point out to partner a possible opening lead against opponents' suit or no-trump contract; or, to suggest a suit in which a possible paying sacrifice may be taken.

2. For aggressive purposes: to coax or trap the enemy into a penalty or to secure the contract for his side.

It may be stated as a general principle that when a player has a fairly strong hand he should, whenever safely possible, enter the bidding for one of these two purposes.

To pass for a trap, except with certain types of hands and in a few rare strategic circumstances is a losing game.

The safety factor is nevertheless the principal one. The player should carefully learn and follow the Rule of 2 and 3, explained in Chapter XXVIII, but repeated briefly here:

When partner has made no bid, assume in his hand two winners if vulnerable and three winners if not vulnerable.

In other words, for any defensive overcall the player should be able to win in his own hand within two tricks of his contract if vulnerable and within three tricks of his contract if not vulnerable.

STRONG AND WEAK OVERCALLS

Some overcalls warn partner that the bidding is made primarily for defensive purposes and that he must bid, if at all, on his own responsibility. These are:

(*a*) Minimum (non-jump) overcalls in a suit.

(*b*) Pre-emptive overcalls at the level of four when holding long, weak suits with plenty of winners, but little of value in honour-tricks.

Other bids tell partner that the hand is strong. The defenders' strong bids are:

(*a*) An immediate overcall in a suit previously bid by the opponents, which is forcing to game.

(*b*) A take-out double, which asks partner to respond in his best suit.

(*c*) A jump overcall to two or three of a suit (always one more than necessary simply to overcall).

(*d*) An overcall of one, two or three no-trump, which is about the same as a take-out double but with no-trump distribution.

(*e*) A no-trump overcall of opponents' opening pre-emptive bid of four or five, which is simply a powerful take-out double, and absolutely forcing.

MINIMUM DEFENSIVE OVERCALLS

Any defensive overcall should show, in addition to the winners required under the Rule of 2 and 3, about 1½ honour-tricks. In most cases the overcall also shows a five-card or longer biddable suit.

A defensive overcall of one-odd should be made:

When not vulnerable with four winners, including about 1½ honour-tricks and a suit as good as Q 10 x x x or K Q x x.

When vulnerable, five *sure* winners, including 1½ honour-tricks and a suit as good as Q J 10 x x or A Q J x.

A strong four-card suit may be used, but only when the hand as a whole contains the required number of winners.

The requirement of 1½ honour-tricks may be shaded only when the hand contains more than the minimum number of winners.

A minimum overcall of two-odd should be made with the following strength:

When not vulnerable, with five winners, including a fairly good five-card suit (A J x x x). The hand should contain 1½ honour-tricks or more. No overcall of two may be made on a four-card suit.

When vulnerable, the hand should contain six *sure* winners with a strong five-card suit (preferably a rebiddable suit) and two or more honour-tricks.

Overcalls at the level of three or higher, when forced by the

opponents' bidding (that is, when not jump bids) require one or more additional winners, depending upon how high the bid is.

The following hands are proper overcalls of one-odd, an opponent having opened with one diamond.

Bid one spade with ♠ K Q J 10 7 6 ♥ 9 4 ♦ A 7 5 ♣ 8 3
Bid one heart with ♠ 8 6 3 ♥ A K Q 8 5 ♦ 7 ♣ 9 6 5 4
Bid one heart with ♠ 9 3 ♥ A Q 7 5 ♦ Q 6 2 ♣ Q J 10 7

However, the last of the above hands should be passed if vulnerable because it does not contain enough playing strength. The following hands are sound vulnerable overcalls at the range of two, opponent having opened with one spade:

Bid two diamonds with ♠ 9 ♥ K 6 ♦ A Q J 7 4 2 ♣ 10 8 4
Bid two hearts with ♠ 6 5 3 ♥ Q J 10 9 5 ♠ K Q 10 5 ♣ A
Pass with ♠ 9 6 ♥ A K 7 5 ♦ A 8 4 3 ♣ 5 3 2, because the hand, which contains three honour-tricks, has not enough winners for a vulnerable overcall either at one or at two.

JUMP OVERCALLS OF THREE[1]

A distinction must be drawn between the overcall at the range of three when it is a jump bid and when it is necessary merely to overcall the last opposing bid. In this bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	3 ♦

East's bid of three diamonds is a regular overcall which does not guarantee any particular honour-trick holding, but merely the ability to win six tricks if not vulnerable, seven

[1] In previous editions of this book an overcall which represented a jump to three of a suit was substantially the same as an opening three-bid, regardless of whether one or two rounds of bidding were skipped by the three-bidder. Under those conditions there was a vast difference between the two following sequences:

1. East	South	2. East	South
1 ♥	2 ♠	1 ♠	3 ♥

The No. 1 situation remains as it is thoroughly explained on page 263 and now the No. 2 sequence, instead of representing an overcall based merely on a solid heart suit is identical in implication with the No. 1. The same applies to an overcall of three diamonds over one spade or one heart or three clubs over one diamond. Henceforth these shall be strength-showing overcalls requesting light raises or at least light responses from partner.

tricks if vulnerable. A distinction must also be made between the single jump overcall and such an overcall as:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	3 ♠		

In this case, West's overcall, being one level higher than required for a strength-showing jump overcall is not a strong bid and therefore by sheer logic is a shut-out attempt.

PRE-EMPTIVE OVERCALLS

All pre-emptive overcalls are strictly based upon the Rule of 2 and 3. There is no minimum number of honour-tricks required.

RAISES OF DEFENSIVE OVERCALLS

The fact that a defensive overcall is based on the Rule of 2 and 3 makes it easy for the responding hand to raise. He simply counts his supporting winners in accordance with the principles stated in Chapter IV, deducts two tricks if vulnerable and three tricks if not vulnerable, and raises once for each trick in excess of these figures.

The partner of the defender who overcalls should observe these modifications in valuing his hand.

1. Since he can reasonably assume the overcall should have been made on a five-card suit, he may consider three small trumps, Q x, K x, or A x as adequate trump support.

2. He should count nothing for length in any side suit unless his suit is headed by at least one honour-trick.

In taking out partner's overcall with a different suit, the other defender should count his partner only for the 1½ honour-tricks shown by the bid and should be safe within the limits of the Rule of 2 and 3 after adding his own winners to partner's expected winners.

FORCING TAKE-OUT OF AN OVERCALL

There are occasions when the partner of an overcaller can be fairly certain that his side can make game in some suit or no-trump, despite the adverse opening bid. But he may not have sufficient support for partner's bid suit to raise to game.

In that case, he can give a one round force by making a jump take-out in a new suit.

Example: West deals and bids one club. North overcalls with one heart. East passes. South holds:

♠ A Q 10 8 4 ♥ Q J ♦ A J 6 2 ♣ 4 3

South should feel that with North able to overcall, a game is well in sight. South cannot tell, however, whether spades, hearts, diamonds, or possibly no-trump would be the best contract. To assure himself of another chance to bid, South should now bid two spades. South's final decision will, of course, be based on North's forced rebid.

CHAPTER XXII

THE TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

The defender whose hand in honour-tricks exceeds the usual sound opening bid has at his disposal a group of strength-showing bids of which the most valuable and most flexible is the *take-out double*.

DOUBLES CLASSIFIED

The literal meaning of a double is that the doubling player does not believe the opponents can make their contract, and wishes to increase the value of the undertrick penalties he expects to score. A double which is made for this purpose—that is, to penalize the opponents—is a *penalty double*.

Some doubles, however, are conventional bids signalling to partner a strong hand and requesting partner to take it out with a response which best shows the nature of his hand. This type of double is called a *take-out double*.[1]

The only time a player should even consider passing his partner's take-out double is when he is so strong in the opponents' trump suit and in general defensive strength that he feels certain the opponents will be defeated at their doubled contract.

DEFINITION OF THE TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

A double is meant for a take-out.

1. Provided partner has made no bid, double or redouble; and provided the doubled bid is not more than one no-trump or three[2] of a suit.

2. The double must be made at the player's first opportunity.[3]

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[1] The penalty double is sometimes called a 'business double', and the take-out double an 'informatory' or 'informative' double. By a few players they are called respectively 'positive' and 'negative'. The terms given to them in this book are, however, more precise. [2] See also 'Optional Doubles', page 266-7.

[3] Unless it is a double to reopen the bidding (pages 252-3).

3. A take-out double may be made by the player who has opened the bidding, provided partner has passed his opening bid and provided the opening bid was a *suit-bid of one*, not any no-trump bid or any suit-bid of two or more.

4. A player may repeat a take-out double when his partner, released by an intervening bid, has failed to respond to his first take-out double; but when partner passes the first double for penalties (page 222) it is construed as a response and any subsequent double by either partner is for penalties.

It follows that any other double is meant for penalties (*Chapter XXIV*).

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

The take-out double is one of the most important of the prepared bids. An opponent has already opened the bidding, advertising possession of a hand which at the very least will probably win three defensive tricks. The opener's partner may sit behind the doubler with the balance of power. In the face of this opposing strength the defender, by doubling, commands his partner to bid with a possible Yarborough.

Before making a take-out double, the doubler should make sure that if his partner is forced to respond on a minimum hand his support for partner's suit will be such that the result will not be disastrous. If there is any suit in which partner may respond and which the doubler is not prepared to support strongly, then the doubler should have in his hand an 'escape' suit—a rebiddable trump suit of his own into which he can take out partner's response at a contract safe under the Rule of 2 and 3.

These are the minimum honour-trick requirements with which a take-out double should be made:

3 *honour-tricks divided in three suits*; and if any one of the suits has less than four cards, the hand should contain strong intermediates.

3 *honour-tricks in two suits*, provided the hand has a rebiddable suit containing 4 trump-tricks or more.

These requirements must be shaded only when there is sufficient length and intermediate strength in any suit part-

ner may bid to assure the development of added low-card tricks.

MAJOR SUIT SUPPORT

A take-out double always implies major-suit support.

When the doubled bid is a major suit, strong support in the other major may be expected by the doubler's partner. If at times such support is lacking, then the doubler will have equivalent values.

The following hands justify take-out doubles of an opponent's bid of *one heart*:

1. ♠ K Q 5 3 ♥ 7 2 ♦ A Q J 5 ♣ K J 10
   Double; an ideal type of hand with three honour-tricks and support for any suit partner bids.
2. ♠ A 8 6 3 ♥ 5 ♦ A 7 5 4 ♣ A 6 4 2
   Three honour-tricks, but very weak in intermediates. If vulnerable, pass; if not vulnerable, double.
3. ♠ 8 6 5 3 2 ♥ — ♦ A K Q 2 ♣ K J 10 4
   Double; an ideal hand since the five spades are as good support for a response in that suit as four strong cards would be.
4. ♠ K 10 9 ♥ 5 ♦ A Q J 6 3 ♣ A J 6 5
   Double; though there are only three spades, the support for all suits is good and a take-out double best expresses the strength of the hand.
5. ♠ A J 10 9 ♥ 4 ♦ K J 10 8 ♣ Q J 10 8
   Double; the slight deficiency in honour-tricks is more than made up by excellent distributional support for any suit and the many high intermediate cards.

THE STRATEGIC DOUBLE

When the doubler has strength in only two suits, with one playable trump suit of his own, he doubles because:

1. If his partner fits either of his two strong suits, that will make an ideal trump suit.

2. It is first desirable to show partner a hand stronger than could be shown by an overcall.

For example, holding:

♠ 6 ♥ A Q 7 3 ♦ A K J 6 5 4 ♣ 10 4

When an opponent bids one spade or one club, the proper action is to double. If partner responds in hearts, a game is very likely to be made. If partner responds in the weak club suit a prompt and safe rescue can be effected in diamonds. Meanwhile, partner knows that the doubler's hand has at least three honour-tricks.

Other such hands justifying a double are:

♠ K Q 10 9 8 ♥ A K 5 4 ♦ 6 ♣ 4 3 2
♠ A 6 ♥ A K Q 8 ♦ K Q 6 2 ♣ 10 4 3

Double opponent's bid of one club.

STRENGTH IN THE OPPONENTS' SUIT

A hand on which a double should be made when strong in the opponents' suit will conform to one of these types:

1. The doubler has one or more probable tricks in honours in the opponents' suit.
2. The doubling hand has a long, strong suit, five cards or more, which the opponent has bid.

In the first type of hand, the doubler is prepared, if his partner's response does not please him, to bid no-trump. He must have well above 3 honour-tricks.

In the second type of hand the strength of the hand is shown by first doubling and the possession of the suit is shown by bidding the opponents' suit later. The handling of this type of hand calls for extreme caution; the doubler must be prepared to play the hand at two of the opponents' suit with no support from partner.

Let us assume the first hand opens with one spade, second hand should double, holding:

♠ K J 10 9 7 6 ♥ A J 6 5 ♦ A K ♣ 5

If his partner replies in hearts, all is well; otherwise he can bid two spades. He also doubles, holding:

♠ A J 10 ♥ K J 10 4 ♦ A Q J 10 ♣ J 5

He hopes for a heart response, can support diamonds, and can bid two no-trump over two clubs.

THE DOUBLE OF ONE NO-TRUMP

A sharp distinction must be drawn between the take-out

double of a suit and the take-out double of one no-trump.

In the first place, most opening no-trumps bid are made with strong hands, increasing the likelihood that the doubler's partner will be weak and subject to a penalty double. In addition to this the doubler must face the probability that the no-trump hand has strength in every suit, so that it is difficult to find a hand which is prepared for any response partner may make, and it is equally difficult to consider any possible escape suit 'safe'.

An additional consideration is that, while the take-out double of a suit-bid discourages a penalty pass by partner, the double of one no-trump welcomes a penalty pass if partner has the slightest excuse for making one.

A double of an opening one no-trump bid with the following hand is not only futile but is courting disaster:

♠ A 7 5 ♥ A Q 8 ♦ 9 6 2 ♣ A Q 5 4

Though the hand contains four honour-tricks, it is just as likely as not to win exactly four tricks, with the additional disadvantage that any opening lead is likely to present declarer with an extra trick in the suit led. The result of the one-no-trump double on such a hand will probably be that declarer will make his contract with one or two overtricks or that partner will take out in some four-card suit and be defeated, if vulnerable, about 1100 points.

After considering these circumstances, the defender will usually find that he can seldom double one no-trump except with a five-card or longer suit of a very solid nature, offering an admirable opening lead should the opponents play the hand, and an adequate landing spot should partner be forced to take the double out and submit to a penalty double by opponents.

The Rule of Two and Three should be applied to the rescue suit, with this always kept in mind: that if partner responds to the double in a suit higher ranking than the escape suit, a bid of three may be required to rescue him. The doubler's hand should be prepared to win at least seven tricks if vulnerable and six tricks if not vulnerable. The following hands justify doubles of opening one no-trump bids:

♠ K 6	♠ A K J	♠ A Q 6 4
♥ A 10 4	♥ Q J 10 9 8	♥ K Q J 7
♦ A K Q 9 5 3	♦ Q 5	♦ K 2
♣ Q 8	♣ A 4 3	♣ A J 6

THE POSITIONAL FACTOR IN DOUBLES

So far the discussion of doubles has been based on the supposition that second hand (the defender who follows the opening bidder in the auction) has held the strong hand and has made the take-out double. The requirements are not materially changed when it is his partner, the fourth hand to bid, who doubles.

When the opener's partner has responded to the opening bid, fourth hand is faced with this situation: both opponents have bid. His partner, who has had a chance to bid, was not even strong enough to overcall. Here the danger becomes greater than ever that partner's hand may be completely worthless.

Yet the knowledge of this danger must not be allowed to scare the defender away from taking action, for otherwise he would become a prey to the evil of underbidding and more particularly to the opponents' psychic bids.

When the bidding is as follows:

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♠	

East should refrain from doubling on the following hand, which would have been a justifiable double for West to make over the one-diamond bid:

♠ Q 9 6 3 ♥ K Q 6 5 ♦ 8 2 ♣ A Q J

However, with the following hand:

♠ Q 5 ♥ A K 6 2 ♦ Q 7 3 ♣ A K 5 4

East has so many honour-tricks that he cannot afford not to give his partner some indication of his strength and should double.

A take-out double when the opponents have already reached a contract of two or three must be proportionately stronger than a take-out double of a one-bid.

REOPENING THE BIDDING

The situation when the opening bid has been passed by the opener's partner calls for special treatment.

In the first place, it is unlikely that the opponents have passed out a game hand at a one-bid. The defender's greatest risk in giving his opponents another chance to bid is that they will make a higher part-score.

In the second place, there is always a strong possibility that the defender who is second hand has passed a hand of better than average strength and yet not strong enough for an overcall or take-out double. Such hands may be of two types:

♠ A 9 5 ♥ K 8 3 ♦ A 7 4 2 ♣ K Q 5

With this hand a take-out double of any opening bid would be dangerous, particularly when vulnerable, and the defender sitting second hand would be forced to pass. The other type of hand is:

♠ K J 7 4 3 ♥ A Q 6 ♦ 5 4 ♣ K 8 5

When the opening bid is one spade the defender cannot double in second position, nor can he bid; therefore, he must pass and hope the opponents bid too high in spades so that he may double them for penalties.

In reopening the bidding the defender in fourth position may therefore double for a take-out with 2 honour-tricks and with strength in only two suits. His partner may take him out in a suit and make a part-score, and with strength in the opponents' suit his partner can make a profitable penalty pass of their one-bid.

A double of a one no-trump bid which has been passed should be made with about 2½ honour-tricks, which may be reduced to 2 honour-tricks with a few Jacks and tens. Here the object is principally penalties.

REOPENING WITH AN OVERCALL

When the fourth-hand defender has not the proper distributional type of hand for a double, but has a biddable suit with about 1½ honour-tricks, he should reopen the bidding with a simple overcall even though his hand is a trick short of the safety margin required by the Rule of 2 and 3. Holding a strong suit and about 2½ honour-tricks, he should make a jump overcall of two.

Assume that the bidding has gone:

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	Pass	

East should double, holding:

♠ J 9 6 4 ♥ K Q 5 ♦ 10 3 ♣ A 7 4 2 or
♠ K 6 2 ♥ Q J 5 2 ♦ A 4 ♣ 9 6 5 4

East should bid two clubs, holding:

♠ 7 ♥ K 5 4 ♦ Q 3 2 ♣ K 9 7 6 3 2

East should bid two spades, holding:

♠ A Q J 8 4 3 ♥ 7 2 ♦ 8 4 ♣ K J 7

RESPONSES TO TAKE-OUT DOUBLES

When one defender has made a take-out double, his partner is expected to respond by bidding his best suit. Unless released by an intervening bid he must not pass,[1] no matter how weak his hand is. The weaker the hand, the greater the necessity for taking out the double.

When the take-out double is passed by the next opponent, the doubler's partner must bid; therefore his response is a *forced response.*

When the opponent bids over partner's take-out double, a pass is in order with a weak hand and a bid should be made only when holding some strength. A bid made over an intervening bid is therefore a *free response.*

Since the forced response cannot be avoided, the doubler's partner's only thought is what to bid.

CHOICE OF SUITS

The prime motive of the doubler's partner, when holding a minimum hand (from 0 to ½ honour-trick), is to get out of trouble as cheaply as possible.

First he looks for his longest suit. If he has only one suit of four cards or more, he takes out in that suit.

The doubled bid is one heart. Holding:

♠ 6 5 ♥ 9 4 3 ♦ J 7 6 4 2 ♣ 7 5 3 bid two diamonds

♠ 6 5 2 ♥ 9 6 3 ♦ J 7 4 3 ♣ 10 8 4 bid two diamonds

Holding two suits of four cards or more, and ½ honour-trick or less, bid the one which can be shown more cheaply.

(*a*) If one of the suits can be shown by a one-bid, and the other requires a two-bid, take out with the one-bid.

(*b*) If both suits require the same number of tricks, show the lower ranking.

The doubled bid is one diamond. Holding:

♠ 6 2 ♥ 8 7 4 3 ♦ 9 6 4 ♣ Q 8 6 3 bid one heart

[1] Except with great strength in the opponents' suit (page 258).

The doubled bid is one heart. Holding:

♠ 6 2 ♥ 8 7 5 ♦ Q 10 6 3 ♣ 10 8 5 4 bid two clubs

The doubled bid is one club. Holding:

♠ 10 9 7 4 ♥ 6 5 ♦ J 6 5 3 ♣ 8 4 2 bid one diamond

This allows partner to rescue himself, if that is his plan, with a bid of only one heart. If the double were taken out with one spade, a rescue bid of two hearts would be necessary.

THE THREE-CARD SUIT

The most embarrassing situation that the doubler's partner can face is to have a weak hand with no four-card suit except the opponents' suit.

The doubled bid is one heart. The partner holds: ♠ 9 6 5 ♥ J 7 4 3 ♦ 8 6 3 ♣ 7 4 2. He cannot bid one no-trump, which is a strength-showing response; he has no four-card suit with which to take out the double. *He must not pass.*

The solution of this difficulty is to bid the lowest-ranking three-card suit. In the example just given, the response would be *two clubs.*

The response of two clubs is not an artificial response. The doubler's partner does not bid two clubs merely because he has a blank hand. If he has a four-card unbid suit he should show it. If he has only two clubs and three diamonds, he should bid the diamonds. This will happen, however, only in the following two cases:

1. Doubler's partner holds five cards of the opponents' suit: ♠ 9 7 5 4 2 ♥ 8 6 5 ♦ 10 5 2 ♣ 6 3. The doubled bid is one spade. Respond two diamonds.

2. The doubled bid is one club. With ♠ 8 7 3 ♥ 9 5 4 ♦ 7 5 2 ♣ J 8 7 6 respond one diamond.

In rare cases, holding a completely worthless hand, the doubler's partner may fall back on a minor-suit take-out with a three-card suit rather than take out with two of a higher suit.

The doubled bid is one spade; bid two clubs, rather than two hearts, holding ♠ 9 7 5 ♥ 8 6 4 3 ♦ J 10 6 ♣ 8 5 2.

But if the doubled bid is one heart, bid one spade with

♠ 8 6 5 4 ♥ 8 6 3 ♦ 7 5 2 ♣ 8 7 6

Hands containing from ½ to 1-plus honour-tricks: With hands containing more than ½ honour-trick there is little danger of a disaster, provided the take-out double is a sound one. The principal consideration of the doubler's partner is how best to show the nature of his hand.

Usually he should simply bid his longest suit. The length of the suit is more important than the rank of the cards it contains.

The doubled bid is one spade. Bid two clubs, holding

♠ 8 6 ♥ 9 5 ♦ Q J 10 7 ♣ 8 7 5 4 2

Bid two diamonds, holding

♠ 8 6 ♥ 9 5 4 ♦ Q J 10 7 ♣ Q 6 5 3

THE MAJOR SUIT PREFERENCE

The take-out double implies strength in the major suits, and, if the doubled bid is a major, practically guarantees strength in the other major.

Therefore, with a four-card major suit including a card as good as the Jack, the major should be shown even when the hand also contains a five-card minor suit. Thus, the response to a take-out double of one heart would be one spade on this hand:

♠ J 9 7 3 ♥ 10 4 3 ♦ 6 ♣ A 8 6 4 2

This does not apply in the case of 6-4 distribution:

♠ J 9 7 3 ♥ 10 4 ♦ 6 ♣ A 10 8 7 4 2

Bid two clubs, and show the spades later; then partner will be sure that the spades are a four-card suit.

When holding two four-card major suits, prefer spades even when the hearts are stronger; but a five-card heart suit should be bid in preference to a stronger four-card spade holding.

The doubled bid being one diamond, bid one spade with

♠ Q 8 4 2 ♥ A J 6 5 ♦ 6 4 3 ♣ 8 7

Bid one heart with ♠ Q J 10 8 ♥ 10 7 6 4 3 ♦ 8 7 ♣ 6 5

THE NO-TRUMP RESPONSE

A no-trump response to a take-out double is always en-

couraging, showing at least 1 honour-trick and often more.

With a stopper in the opponents' suit, respond with one no-trump (unless a major-suit response is available) provided the hand contains at least 1 honour-trick.

The doubled bid being one heart, bid one no-trump with

♠ J 6 3 ♥ Q 10 7 ♦ K 8 5 4 ♣ 6 5 2

This rule is not followed when the one honour-trick is the Ace of the opponents' suit, and the hand has nothing else of value, but does contain a four-card length:

♠ 8 6 3 ♥ A 7 ♦ 10 6 4 2 ♣ 8 5 4 3—bid two diamonds, not one no-trump, over one heart doubled. With ♠ 8 6 3 ♥ A 8 5 4 ♦ 6 3 2 ♣ 9 7 3 it is necessary to bid one no-trump.

The one no-trump response does not always show a stopper in the opponents' suit. It is the standard medium used to show a hand which contains about 1½-2 honour-tricks with no five-card or strong four-card suit to show.

The player who has made the take-out double should refrain from raising the no-trump contract unless he himself has a stopper in the suit adversely bid. Without this stopper, the doubler should rebid in some suit. Now, if the responder actually had the suit stopped, he may rebid no-trump.

The doubled bid is one heart. With:

♠ K 6 5 ♥ 8 4 3 ♦ A Q 2 ♣ 8 6 4 2

To respond with a bid of only two clubs would put fear into the heart of partner, who, being prepared for such a response on a weak hand, would probably pass and let the hand be played at two clubs. To respond with three clubs, thus giving the impression of strength by a jump bid, would deceive the doubler as to the strength of the club suit. The one no-trump response shows the strength of the hand and encourages the doubler to rebid. If the doubler, having a minimum, passes one no-trump the contract (seven tricks) will probably be made even though the entire heart suit be run against it.

A response of two no-trump to partner's take-out double also shows about 2 honour-tricks, but must also guarantee a probable double stopper in the opponents' suit.

THE PENALTY PASS

As a general rule, a double of one no-trump should be

passed whenever there are any grounds for passing; a double of a suit-bid should be passed only when the penalty is sure and the chance for a game very remote.

PENALTY PASS OF ONE NO-TRUMP

A take-out double of one no-trump should be passed when the doubler's partner holds 1½ or more honour-tricks. In some cases he should pass even with 1 or 1-plus honour-trick, if he has some strength—Queen or Jack—in at least three suits.

Pass partner's take-out double of one no-trump holding any of the following hands:

♠ A 6 5 ♥ Q 5 4 ♦ J 10 6 3 ♣ 8 4 2
♠ K 7 5 ♥ A J 6 ♦ 9 7 2 ♣ 8 6 4 2
♠ 10 6 ♥ Q 5 3 ♦ A J 7 5 4 ♣ 8 7 2

A double of one no-trump should not be passed even with 1½ honour-tricks, when the strength is all in one long suit.

With ♠ 6 3 ♥ 8 7 ♦ K Q J 8 5 4 ♣ 10 6 2 do not pass partner's take-out double of one no-trump; if the one long suit cannot be led, established and brought in, the hand is worth but a trick or two in defence against the opponents' contract.

♠ 8 5 ♥ 7 6 4 ♦ A Q 9 6 5 3 ♣ 10 2

Pass for penalties if on lead against the opponents' no-trump contract, but take the double out if it is partner's lead.

A take-out of a doubled one no-trump bid usually shows weakness, even though sometimes the doubler's partner must take the double out with a hand such as those just shown.

PENALTY PASS OF A SUIT-BID

When partner doubles a suit-bid of one, a penalty pass should emphatically be avoided. Nothing but extraordinary trump length justifies this pass.[1]

In counting up expected defensive winners against opponents' suit-bid, the doubler's partner adds his trump tricks and honour-tricks in side suits to three expected honour-tricks in his partner's hand; no more. Unless the total is at least seven tricks, do not pass.

[1] A good rule is: Pass only when prepared for a lead in the opponents' trump suit. (Usually the penalty pass calls for this lead).

Opponents' contract of one heart, doubled for a take-out by partner, may be left in with the following hand

♠ 8 ♥ Q J 9 7 6 3 ♦ A 6 ♣ J 9 7 4

particularly when the opponents are vulnerable. A two-trick penalty (500 points) may be anticipated. If the opponents are not vulnerable the pass is still proper, but only because the game is uncertain and a two-trick set reasonably sure.

STRENGTH-SHOWING RESPONSES

Holding about 2 honour-tricks and a strong four-card suit or any biddable five-card suit, the doubler's partner shows his strength by making a jump response.

1. When the jump response can be made at the level of two, it should be made with any biddable four-card suit, especially a major suit.

Take out partner's double of one heart with *two* spades, holding ♠ Q J 6 2 ♥ 5 3 ♦ A Q 7 ♣ 10 8 6 4.

2. When the jump response requires a bid of three, the suit should contain at least five cards.

The doubled bid being one heart, bid *three* diamonds holding ♠ 8 6 5 ♥ 6 ♦ A Q J 6 4 ♣ K 8 4 3.

3. With a six-card suit, the response may be made at either two-odd or three-odd with only 1½ honour-tricks.

For example, take out partner's double of one spade with *three* hearts, holding ♠ 6 2 ♥ K 6 5 4 3 2 ♦ A 5 4 ♣ 7 6.

THE PRE-EMPTIVE RESPONSE

Holding a six-card or longer major suit, with unbalanced distribution, a jump to game (four-odd) may be made with about one honour-trick. Usually this pre-emptive response is made with seven-card or longer suits.

Respond four spades to a double of any other suit with:

♠ Q J 10 7 6 4 2 ♥ 8 5 3 ♦ 9 2 ♣ 8

FREE RESPONSES TO TAKE-OUT DOUBLES

When the intervening opponent makes any bid over partner's take-out double, the doubler's partner is relieved of the obligation to respond. Any bid he makes at this point shows some strength.

In general, these are the requirements for free bids when partner has doubled for a take-out:

1. *At the level of one:* bid a five-card major suit headed by ½ honour-trick. The hand need contain nothing outside.

2. *At the level of two:* bid a five-card suit, major or minor, if the hand contains at least 1 honour-trick. Bid a six-card major suit headed by ½ honour-trick, even with nothing outside.

3. *At the level of three or four:* the hand should contain 1½ honour-tricks with any five-card suit; with a six-card major suit 1 honour-trick is enough.

Four-card suits: require an additional ½ honour-trick in each case.

Assume that the bidding has been:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	Double	1 ♥	

East may now bid one spade, holding:

♠ K 10 8 6 4 ♥ 6 5 ♦ 8 6 4 2 ♣ 6 3

He should not bid two diamonds unless he holds as much as

♠ K 9 6 ♥ 7 4 3 ♦ Q J 10 6 3 ♣ 8 4

or ♠ K 10 6 ♥ 7 4 ♦ A 10 8 6 ♣ 9 6 5 2

A one no-trump response in this case would show a stopper in clubs, but not necessarily a stopper in hearts (West's take-out double having implied sufficient heart strength to stop the suit). With no stopper in either suit, East should avoid bidding no-trump. Any no-trump bid at this point shows about 1½ honour-tricks:

♠ Q 6 ♥ 7 4 3 ♦ A J 8 ♣ Q 9 6 4 2 bid one no-trump

With four or more cards in North's suit, and 1½ honour-tricks, East should *double*.

♠ 6 3 ♥ J 8 6 4 ♦ A Q 6 ♣ J 9 4 3 double

PROCEDURE WHEN THE TAKE-OUT DOUBLE IS REDOUBLED

One of the most controversial questions in Bridge arises when the take-out double is redoubled. Even to-day many first-class players do not know what East should do when placed in the following predicament:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥ or 1 NT	Double	Redouble	?

If East were to grasp this opportunity to delay the embarrassing moment, and pass when holding one of the terrible hands which offer so much difficulty in responding, North could in every case make a 'psychic' redouble with complete impunity. A pass by East with a strong hand would be meaningless, since West would fear that he had passed a blank hand and would take out the redouble himself. Many of the most lucrative penalty situations in the entire game of Bridge would be lost.

If East can pass and by passing send to his partner the clear message that he believes one no-trump or one heart doubled can be defeated, North cannot make use of psychic tactics and every penalty situation will be adequately utilized.

The general principle to follow when a take-out double has been redoubled is this:

With any but a strong hand the doubler's partner must never pass.

WHEN THE REDOUBLED CONTRACT IS ONE NO-TRUMP

When one no-trump is doubled and redoubled, the doubler's partner should act exactly as though the redouble had never occurred. If, without the redouble, he would have made a penalty pass of one no-trump doubled, he should now pass the redouble and his partner should unhesitatingly read it as a penalty pass. If he would ordinarily have taken out the doubled contract of one no-trump, he should now take out the redoubled contract.

WHEN THE REDOUBLED CONTRACT IS IN A SUIT

The procedure of doubler's partner when a suit-bid is doubled and redoubled is slightly more complicated.

1. *With less than* 1½ *honour-tricks* he should not pass unless he holds about 4 trump tricks in the opponents' suit—something like Q J 10 9 x x. Otherwise, holding up to 1½ honour-tricks he should respond as though the redouble had not occurred. This includes even bidding a three-card minor suit if his only four-card length is the opponents'

suit, and bidding one no-trump without a stopper but with about 1½ honour-tricks.

2. *With about 2 honour-tricks* and some strength (as little as J x x or any four small cards) in the opponents' redoubled suit, he should pass. By passing he invites the doubler to pass also and allow the opponents to play the hand at one redoubled.

The doubler himself should not pass if his take-out double was based on a distributional type of hand lacking any strength in the opponents' suit; but if he has some strength such as A x or Q x x in the opponents' suit, and his full 3 honour-tricks, he should pass in turn and the penalty should range anywhere from 600 to 1600 points.

The procedure when a suit bid is doubled and redoubled is illustrated in the following example:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Double	Redouble	

Suppose North has made a psychic redouble with such a hand as ♠ 3 ♥ 5 4 ♦ Q J 10 9 7 6 4 ♣ 9 4 3. If East's actions at this point were of indefinite meaning, East might pass, South would pass and West would not know what to do. A contract of one spade redoubled, if made, would give North-South game for seven tricks. West, fearing that East's hand might be very weak, could not risk this and would bid.

Playing with the aid of a series of illuminating bids at his disposal, East will bid two clubs, holding

♠ 10 9 7 3 ♥ 5 4 2 ♦ 7 6 3 ♣ 4 3 2

He will bid one no-trump, holding

♠ 6 5 ♥ A Q 4 ♦ Q 6 5 3 ♣ 10 8 7 2

He will pass, holding

♠ 10 9 7 2 ♥ A Q 7 ♦ 10 6 ♣ K 7 4 3

When East passes, if South also passes, West will bid two hearts holding ♠ 8 ♥ K J 10 6 5 ♦ A K 4 2 ♣ Q J 10.

But West will pass and defend one spade redoubled if he holds ♠ K 8 4 ♥ K 10 4 2 ♦ A K 4 2 ♣ A 6.

CHAPTER XXIII

STRENGTH-SHOWING OVERCALLS

Most strong hands which the defender will hold he will show by the use of the take-out double. For other types of strong hands there are specialized strength-showing bids which show the hand type as well as the strength.

THE JUMP OVERCALL

A jump overcall of two in a suit (as, *two* spades over an opponent's bid of one heart) shows a hand containing 3½ honour-tricks or slightly more, with:

1. *Two five-card or longer suits.* With such a hand a take-out double may lose a round of bidding, whereas a jump overcall makes it possible to show the first suit and the general strength of the hand with a single bid, and at the second opportunity to show the other suit.

2. *A hand containing one strong suit, and in all eight winners.*

The advantage of the strength-showing jump overcall is found in the following cases:

1. Suppose South bids one diamond and West, second hand, holds:

♠ A K 10 5 4 ♥ A Q J 7 5 ♦ 6 ♣ 3 2

If West doubles, East's response will probably be two clubs. West must then bid two spades and risk having the bidding dropped (though East may have support for hearts); or bid *three* spades, which forces him to a game contract even though East may have no support for either suit.

The jump overcall shows one of the two suits and gives the proper impression of a strength at the same time; it asks for a light raise, yet retains the advantage of being able to pass short of game if partner has a blank.

2. Suppose South bids one diamond and West holds:

♠ A Q 10 9 6 5 3 ♥ 6 ♦ A K 5 ♣ 3 2

If West doubles and East responds two clubs, West does not know whether East has a Yarborough, or something like x x x in spades and Q J x or a doubleton in diamonds, which would make game

possible on a finesse. If West makes a jump overcall, bidding two spades, East will respond with the barest sort of support, and will pass safely if he has no support.

RESPONDING TO THE JUMP OVERCALL

In general, some response should be made when holding about one trick, either an honour or a ruffing trick. A ruffing-trick consists of a singleton and three or more trumps. With a doubleton and three trumps, and ½ honour trick outside, some response should be made.

Lacking trump support, but holding 1 honour-trick or more, partner should respond with two no-trump.

A suit take-out of a jump overcall should show at least 1½ honour-tricks; with less, take out with two no-trump.

THE JUMP OVERCALL OF THREE

In previous editions of this book a jump overcall to the three level (as three hearts over one spade) was not a particularly strong bid, but merely showed a solid suit. This no longer applies. Now such a bid is identical with a jump overcall at the two level, i.e., three hearts over an opponent's one spade is to all intents and purposes the same as two spades over one heart.

THE IMMEDIATE OVERCALL

By far the strongest of all bids available to the defenders is an immediate bid of the suit which the opponents have already bid.

Such an overcall is in the nature of an opening forcing two-bid, and is unconditionally forcing to game.

An overcall in the opponents' suit requires:

At least 5 honour-tricks, or freakish distribution which makes a game both probable and safe even though partner has no assistance.

First round control in the opponents' suit (a void or the Ace); though in rare cases the bid may be made when holding a singleton in the opponents' suit because the defender has such a strong hand that he is afraid to risk any bid which is not forcing to game.

Any one of the following hands would justify an immediate overcall of two clubs over an opponent's bid of one club:

1. ♠ K Q 10 6 ♥ A K Q 5 4 ♦ K J 10 ♣ A
2. ♠ A K 7 5 ♥ K Q J 10 ♦ K Q J 6 ♣ 3
3. ♠ A K Q 10 5 4 2 ♥ A Q J 6 ♦ K Q ♣ —

Do not confuse the immediate overcall in the opponents' suit with a legitimate bid in the opponents' suit following a previous take-out double (page 215).

THE FORCING NO-TRUMP OVERCALL

As powerful in its way as the overcall in the opponents' suit is the no-trump overcall of an opponent's pre-emptive four- or five-bid.

South	West	North	East
4 ♠	4 NT	Pass	

Now East is expected to respond as though to a take-out double; and in fact, the four no-trump overcall *is* a take-out double, albeit an exceptionally powerful one. West's hand is probably on the order of:

♠ 6 ♥ K J 10 9 ♦ A K Q 6 ♣ A K J 4

He can justly feel that there is probably a bettter chance of making five in his partner's suit than of defeating four spades any appreciable amount.

THE THREE NO-TRUMP OVERCALL

The overcall of an opponent's pre-emptive three-bid with three no-trump does not indicate the same type of hand as the four no-trump overcall. If a defender bids three no-trump over his opponents' opening three-spade bid, he is not making a forcing bid, though many good players interpret it that way and are not open to criticism for doing so.

Usually the three no-trump overcall is dependent upon a long, solid minor suit with a sure stopper in the opponents' suit and sure or probable stoppers in the other suits. The following hand is an example:

♠ A 6 ♥ K 9 ♦ A K Q J 7 2 ♣ Q 10 6

This hand will win at least 7 tricks against an opponent's three-spade bid, and with the Ace of hearts and nothing else in partner's hand will produce a game.

OTHER NO-TRUMP OVERCALLS

An overcall of an opponent's suit-bid of one with one no-trump shows a fairly strong hand with 3½ or more honour-tricks, at least five sure winners when vulnerable and four sure winners when not vulnerable, and one or more stoppers in the opponents' suit. This no-trump overcall is equivalent to a take-out double (page 247) except that a goodly share of its strength is in the opponents' suit. In counting winners for this bid an adequately guarded honour in the opponents' suit may be counted as a winner.

An opponents' bid of one heart may be overcalled with one no-trump on any of the following hands:

1. ♠ Q 6 5 ♥ A Q 6 ♦ K Q J 8 ♣ Q J 6
2. ♠ J 8 ♥ Q 10 9 7 ♦ A K 8 4 ♣ A 6 3
3. ♠ A 9 ♥ J 9 5 4 2 ♦ A K 6 ♣ K J 5

If it is necessary to bid two no-trump in order to overcall the opponents' bid, the hand is about the same in honour-trick requirements but must contain one more winner so as to be safe according to the Rule of 2 and 3.

When the bidding is as follows:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	2 NT

East may hold

♠ K 8 4 ♥ A J 10 ♦ A K Q 6 5 ♣ Q 6

whether vulnerable or not.

THE OPTIONAL DOUBLE

Usually when a pre-emptive opening bid is made the strength is divided between the two defenders, with neither of them strong enough to make a full-fledged take-out double. The problem is solved by the use of the optional double.[1]

OPTIONAL DOUBLE OF A THREE-BID

Double an opponent's pre-emptive three-bid with 4 hon-

[1] When this double was introduced in 1935 it was called 'The Co-operative Double'. Its new name is more expressive, though the inference given by the double remains the same.

our-tricks. The hand must have at least three cards in each unbid suit.

If partner has a worthless hand, he can pass. He knows it will be less costly to allow the opponents to make their three spades doubled than to take a four- or five-trick set at four in some suit. He also knows that with 4 honour-tricks in the doubler's hand there is little danger of having high over-trick premiums scored against him.

With a strong hand, including strength in the opponents' suit, the doubler's partner may pass for penalties rather than risk a losing game try on a possible misfit hand.

With about 1½ honour-tricks, and a five-card suit, the doubler's partner should take out the double, knowing that with at least 5½ honour-tricks and at least an eight-card trump length in the two hands, there is a good chance for game. With a six-card suit 1 honour-trick is sufficient. With a freak, no honour-strength is required.

OPTIONAL DOUBLE OF A FOUR-BID

Exactly the same double is used over an opponent's pre-emptive four-bid except that the doubler's hand may be slightly weaker—3½ honour-tricks as the minimum. The doubler should have three cards in each unbid suit.

The doubler's partner should take out at four with about 2 honour-tricks and a five-card suit. For a take-out at the level of five-odd the partner should have a six-card suit, or a very strong five-card suit.

At four-odd, partner may take the double out with only 1 honour-trick and a good six-card suit, or with any seven-card suit. With such distribution the defeat of the opponents' contract is problematical, whereas a contract of four-odd should be safe.

The following hand is a sound double of an opponent's pre-emptive three-spade bid:

♠ 6 ♥ A 7 5 4 ♦ K Q 6 4 3 ♣ A K J

The doubler's partner should now:

Pass, holding ♠ 6 5 ♥ K 8 4 ♦ 10 8 5 3 ♣ 9 6 4 2.

Pass, holding ♠ K Q 9 ♥ K Q 6 ♦ 8 6 4 2 ♣ 7 4 3.

Bid four hearts holding

♠ 7 6 ♥ Q J 8 6 4 ♦ A 7 ♣ 10 8 4 3

REBIDS AFTER A TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

It is important in every department of bidding to avoid making two free bids on a hand which justifies only one. This error must be particularly avoided by the player who has made a take-out double.

Until partner confirms the possession of some strength by making a free bid, the doubler must assume his partner's hand to be an absolute minimum. Therefore, having doubled and received a forced one-spade response, the doubler should raise to two spades but never to three or four spades, holding ♠ K J 7 5 ♥ A 6 ♦ K Q 9 2 ♣ Q 6 2. He must not fall into the error of raising as though his partner's bid were a free one. A three-spade raise would show something like ♠ A K 6 5 ♥ K J 4 ♦ A Q J 2 ♣ K 5.

In order to raise at once to four spades the doubler should be prepared to play at four spades with nothing more than four small cards of the trump suit in his partner's hand. This high requirement may, of course, be shaded when the doubler holds five cards of his partner's suit and knows that even though the high contract may not be made, it cannot be set badly; for example, having doubled one club and received a one-spade response, the doubler may raise at once to four spades with: ♠ K Q 8 7 4 ♥ A Q 10 5 ♦ K Q 6 ♣ 2.

The doubler's partner, if he is intelligent, will realize how strong the doubler must be to give him a double raise, and having been raised at once to three spades he will proceed to bid four spades with even so weak a hand as ♠ K 8 7 5 4 and nothing else.

The same situation should be kept in mind when the doubler, after receiving only a minimum response, bids two no-trump, whether it is a jump bid or not. He can count on nothing from his partner and must be prepared to play the hand for eight tricks all alone or to rescue himself if doubled.

The doubler should keep a constant check on his rebids by first figuring his partner for the minimum shown by a forced response, and then applying the Rule of 2 and 3 to any bid he makes.

REBIDDING A MAJOR SUIT

The doubler's partner will respond on the supposition that he will find four trumps in either major. The doubler,

remembering this, should not at a later stage bid a major suit unless it contains at least five cards. By doubling first and then bidding a major suit the doubler asks his partner for a raise with three small trumps and only about 1 honour-trick outside.

FORCING TO GAME

Having made a take-out double, a player may force to game later by making a jump bid in a new suit.

This bid is rare, since after a forced response from partner the doubler cannot force to game unless he wishes to play there without support. If he had so strong a hand he would probably have made an immediate overcall in the opponents' suit, instead of doubling. There are two cases, however, in which the doubler may wish to make a game-forcing bid later:

1. When he was strong enough to make an immediate overcall, except that he had two or more losers in the opponents' suit.

For example, he would double a one-heart bid instead of bidding two hearts when holding:

♠ A K Q J 7 ♥ 6 5 3 ♦ A K Q ♣ A J

At his next opportunity he would jump one trick in spades. Game is sure if he finds a doubleton heart and some trump support in his partner's hand, without a single face card.

2. When the doubler has such strong support for his partner that he is willing to go to game.

For example, having doubled one heart and received a one-spade response, the doubler may now bid three diamonds holding:

♠ A Q 7 6 4 ♥ 6 ♦ A Q 5 2 ♣ A K 7

SUMMARY OF DEFENDERS' BIDS

To sum up the procedure of the defending hand:

Minimum defensive overcalls show hands of about 1½-2½ honour-tricks which do not offer game unless partner can support freely.

A single jump overcall of two or three in a suit shows about 3½ honour-tricks and asks for a light raise.

A take-out double shows a hand with three or more honour-tricks and strong support for two or three suits.

A jump overcall of four in a suit is a shut-out bid made on a weak hand with a strong suit to interfere with the opponent's bidding.

No-trump overcalls of one, two and three show strong hands of 3½-4 honour-tricks with balanced distribution and the opponents' suit stopped.

An overcall in the opponents' suit or a no-trump overcall of an opposing pre-emptive four- or five-bid is an ultra-powerful hand, forcing to game.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE PENALTY DOUBLE

The purpose of a penalty double is to defeat the opponents' contract and collect the maximum possible number of points in undertrick penalties. Any double is meant for penalties when it conforms to the following conditions:

1. *When partner has bid, doubled or redoubled; or has made a penalty pass of a previous take-out double.*

2. *Even when partner has not bid, if the double is not made at the doubler's first opportunity.*

3. *Whenever the doubled bid is two no-trump, four of a suit, or higher.*

4. *When the player who doubles has made an opening bid in no-trump or of two or more in a suit.*

PENALTIES *versus* TRICK SCORES

Before deciding to make a penalty double of an opponent's bid the player should estimate the points he can score by doubling. He should compare these with the value of the part-score, game or slam he and his partner can bid and make (Chapter XXIX).

A reasonably sure game should not be abandoned in favour of a penalty double unless the opponents can almost surely be defeated two tricks if vulnerable and three tricks if not vulnerable. Either of these score 500 points, roughly equivalent to the actual value of a game. When the 500-point penalty can safely be expected, it is usually better to take the penalty than to bid game.

A *sure* small slam or grand slam should usually be preferred to any penalty double of non-vulnerable opponents. Under the present scoring, a team which is not vulnerable can profitably accept a seven-trick set to avert a vulnerable small slam, and an eleven-trick set (2100) points to prevent a vulnerable grand slam which is worth at the minimum 2140 points. Provided the opponents play the hand in their

best trump suit, it is almost incredible that they will be defeated by so much.

A part-score is worth roughly 160 points, and in theory it is better to defeat vulnerable opponents one trick doubled (200 points) except that, with a margin of only one trick, there is danger that something will go wrong.

THE TWO-TRICK RULE

Any penalty double must be based on the expectancy of defeating the contract by two tricks. 'Sporting' doubles on a margin of but one trick are never advisable.[1] Even when the opponents have bid a game it is not wise to double on a margin of one trick. Declarer may obtain from the double information which will enable him to locate an important honour, and by finessing for that honour he may make his contract.

CLASSIFICATION OF DOUBLES

Penalty doubles can be roughly classified in two groups:

1. Light Doubles.

A light penalty double is a double of an opposing part-score contract which, even if made, will not be sufficient for game. For example, if the opponents make two diamonds undoubled they score 40 points; if they make two diamonds doubled they score 80 points, less than game. A light double is therefore specifically a double of one in any suit or no-trump, and of two in a minor suit.

2. Tight Doubles.

A tight double is a penalty double of an opponent's game bid, or a double of a part-score contract which, if doubled and made, will give them game.

LIGHT DOUBLES

The player who makes a light double thinks that the greatest potential profits can be obtained from doubling the opponents, but—usually because the bidding is still at a very low level—he has not yet received enough information about his partner's hand to be sure.

[1] Except in a duplicate game with match-point scoring.

The light double is by nature tentative.[1]

Almost all light doubles are made when partner opens the bidding and an opponent overcalls. The opening bid being only partly informative, the responder cannot be sure of the sort of hand his partner holds.

For example, consider the following bidding with East and West vulnerable:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	2 ♦	?	

North holds:

♠ A J 4 ♥ 6 ♦ J 6 4 2 ♣ K J 7 6 5

If South has two or three diamonds and three or four honour-tricks outside, West's two-diamond overcall can probably be defeated 500 or 800 points. If South has a long string of hearts headed by the Ace-King and perhaps the King of spades on the side, the two-diamond bid may be made. North cannot be sure which sort of hand South has, yet if he bids or passes he has irreparably lost his chance to double.

Waiting, as most players do, for a holding of five strong trumps before doubling an opponent's overcall not only surrenders most of the best doubling opportunities but is also futile. When ten or eleven cards of the same suit are divided between two hands, the entire deal is probably so freakish (see Law of Symmetry) that the opponents can readily find a good escape suit in which they have fair trump control.

The light double may be effective even against a player whose vulnerable overcalls conform strictly to the Rule of 2 and 3. Caught between two strong hands, without trump support or an entry in partner's hand, even a sound vulnerable overcall may lose three tricks. A three-trick vulnerable penalty is 800 points, which is greater than the value of any game.

The following hand seems to be a safe overcall of two diamonds, even when vulnerable:

♠ Q J 6 ♥ 9 ♦ A K J 7 4 2 ♣ K J 5

But give partner a singleton diamond and no entry with which to

[1] Hence it was formerly called the Tentative Double.

finesse and this hand may win only four or five tricks, yet the opponents probably have not a game in hearts.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A LIGHT DOUBLE

Make a light penalty double of an opponent's vulnerable overcall in the following circumstances:

1. The opponents' contract, if made, must not equal a game even at its double value.

2. The doubler must hold about 2½ honour-tricks.

3. The doubler must be short (no more than two cards) in partner's suit if a major, and no more than three cards if a minor.

4. The doubler must have at least 10 x x x or Q x x in the opponents' suit.

The fact that the doubler holds a biddable suit of his own, even though it be a five-card major suit, should not deter him from doubling provided the other conditions are fulfilled. The following hands call for light doubles, partner having opened with one spade and the next player having overcalled with two clubs:

1. ♠ A 6 ♥ Q 10 5 4 ♦ K 10 3 ♣ K 10 4 2
2. ♠ 7 ♥ A K 8 5 4 ♦ J 9 4 3 ♣ Q 6 5
3. ♠ 5 4 ♥ A K 6 ♦ 10 8 4 3 2 ♣ Q J 5

THE FACTOR OF VULNERABILITY

The requirements given above govern cases in which the opponents are vulnerable and also cases in which both sides are vulnerable. An expected two-trick set of a vulnerable player is as suitable a choice as trying for a vulnerable game.

When the doubler's side is vulnerable and the opponents are not vulnerable, a three-trick set is necessary to repay the loss of the game. The requirements for the double must therefore be tightened up, not as regards honour-tricks so much as regards trump strength.

Thus, double an opponent's two-diamond overcall of partner's one-spade bid when opponents are vulnerable, holding:

♠ Q 6 ♥ K Q 7 ♦ Q 9 6 4 ♣ A J 4 3

But bid two no-trump on the same hand when opponents are not vulnerable.

Double even when the opponents are not vulnerable, holding:

♠ 6 ♥ A K 5 ♦ Q J 8 3 ♣ Q 8 7 5 4

PROCEDURE OF DOUBLER'S PARTNER

When partner has made a light double, the opener should usually pass when his hand is of balanced distribution (containing no void or singleton). He will then have at least two cards in the opponents' suit and will be able to lead trumps, preventing declarer's making his small trumps separately by ruffing. The only time the double is taken out on balanced hands is when the opener has a strong six-card major suit and the minimum in honour-tricks.

For example, partner's light double should not be left in when the opening bid was made on ♠ 8 6 5 ♥ A K Q 7 4 2 ♦ 6 3 ♣ K 8 6. A rebid of two hearts is preferable.

The opener should usually take out the double with a void or singleton in the opponents' suit, for in those cases his distribution is unbalanced and aided by 2½ honour-tricks in partner's hand is likely to produce a game.

THE LIGHT DOUBLE AFTER A NO-TRUMP BID

The greatest opportunities for paying doubles occur when partner has made an opening bid of one no-trump and an opponent is so foolish as to overcall. The no-trump bid gives so much information that the responder can gauge the defensive possibilities of the combined hands with precision never known before the new Culbertson No-trump Bid was introduced.

Consider the following case:

South	West	North	East
Pass	1 NT	2 ♣	

East holds ♠ K 4 2 ♥ 10 7 5 3 ♦ K J ♣ 10 6 5 4. He knows that West has at least 4 honour-tricks and at least three clubs. Therefore, East-West have between them 5 honour-tricks to North's 3; and seven clubs to North's six. A big penalty is almost sure, whereas with only 5 honour-tricks and no long suit a no-trump game for East and West would be unlikely.

The no-trump bidder does not take out a penalty double of this type, for he has already given exact information on

his hand and must assume that the doubler knows what he is doing.

TIGHT DOUBLES

A *tight double* announces that the doubler is convinced the opponents can be defeated enough to compensate for any makeable contract, and is willing to assume the risk on the basis of his own hand and what information he has already received about his partner's hand.

A tight double is based upon an actual count of defensive winners.

COUNT OF DEFENSIVE WINNERS

In valuing your hand for a penalty double:

1. *Count your honour-tricks, exclusive of trump tricks.*

2. *Count as winners guarded honours in the opponents' trump suit and, whenever they are sure to develop, ruffers* (Chapter XXXIX).

3. *Add the minimum number of honour-tricks shown by partner's bids.*

4. *Subtract the total from 13, the difference being the trick-taking limit of the opponents.* If this limit is at least two tricks short of the opponents' contract—and if you cannot expect a greater gain at a bid of your own—make a penalty double.

TAKING OUT A TIGHT DOUBLE

A tight double should rarely be taken out by partner, even though his hand is a blank. The doubler has not asked for any assistance other than that which his partner may previously have guaranteed by bidding.

But the tight penalty double should be taken out when the doubler's partner has seriously deceived the doubler by a previous bid—such as making an opening bid with only 1 or 1½ honour-tricks in his hand—or when his distribution is freakish and his previous bidding has not revealed the fact. Holding a freak hand may justify taking out a penalty double in one of the following cases:

1. When a more advantageous trick-score can be made, but the doubler was not aware of it.

2. When the doubler is evidently counting on tricks which his partner knows he cannot win.

PENALTY DOUBLES OF NO-TRUMP BIDS

The light double is used against adverse no-trump bids only when an opponent overcalls partner's opening suit-bid with one no-trump.

A double of a one no-trump overcall is based upon the Rule of Eight. The opening bid has shown 2½ honour-tricks. If the responder also has 2½ honour-tricks he knows that his side has 5 out of a total of 8½, and that the opponent has probably 3½ honour-tricks at most. With this advantage in honour-tricks, and with the added advantage of the opening lead, the one no-trump bid can probably be defeated by two tricks; and if partner's bid turns out to be more than a minimum, the penalty should be three tricks.

Playing conditions will modify the Rule of Eight, which gives only a rough estimate of trick expectancy. If the doubler has a fit with his partner's suit, something like Q x x or J 10 x, and if his hand contains distributed strength with several tens and nines, he may double a one no-trump overcall with about 2 honour-tricks, sometimes as few as 1½.

Though this is a light double, the opener is expected to pass it unless his distribution is highly unbalanced, consisting of a two-suiter or of one long weak suit which cannot be established at no-trump.

DOUBLES OF NO-TRUMP GAME BIDS

An opponent's three no-trump contract should be doubled when the defenders hold 4 honour-tricks, but rarely will they have this opportunity. Three no-trump is a contract seldom attempted without at least 6 honour-tricks in the combined hands of declarer and dummy, leaving only 2½ or 3 honour-tricks as the portion of the defenders.

A player should not double an adverse three no-trump contract, as a rule, unless he holds (or knows from the bidding that his partner holds) a leadable long suit and sufficient stoppers and entries to establish and cash it before declarer has time to win nine tricks.

When such a suit is available, value the defensive power of the hand as follows:

1. Decide upon the suit to be opened and estimate its combined length and strength in the partnership hands.

2. *Determine how many stoppers declarer's side probably holds in the suit.*

You will need as many entries as the number of declarer's stoppers, *plus one.*[1]

The opening lead may be counted as one of the required entries. The other entries must be honour-tricks which the doubler holds or which he can safely assume that his partner holds. Also counted as an entry is a guarded honour in a suit which is one of declarer's strongest and which he will therefore have to establish.

THE DANGER OF A LONG SUIT

Neither a count of honour-tricks nor accurate valuation of a long suit may be entirely relied upon in doubling a no-trump bid. When declarer's side has a long established suit, he may be able to run off nine tricks before the defenders ever get the lead to make use of their own long suits or honour-tricks. When there is a wide-open minor suit, whether it has been bid by declarer's side or not, the prospective doubler must consider the fact that it may be the basis of the no-trump contract.

THE EFFECT OF A PENALTY DOUBLE ON LEADS

A double of a three no-trump contract (and in fact any penalty double of a no-trump bid) strongly implies the fact that the doubler is dependent upon a strong suit to open. When he has bid a suit it is probably his own suit that he is planning to establish; if his partner has bid a suit, it is probably his partner's suit.

When you bid, then double a no-trump contract, your partner should open your bid suit, If you have not made a bid, but your partner has, you are asking him to open his own suit. If both of you have bid, your partner should choose as explained on the preceding page.

THE EFFECT OF LEADS ON PENALTY DOUBLES

No matter how good a chance you seem to have of defeating the opponents' no-trump contract, unless you have the

[1] This Time Valuation of a long suit is based on the Rule of X-plus-1 (Chapter 41).

opening lead yourself, you must take your partner's expected lead into consideration. If he is likely to make a lead which will nullify your chance of defeating the contract, you must refrain from doubling.

In the absence of any bidding information your partner will probably open his best suit against the doubled no-trump contract, but if he has no fairly good suit of his own he will open some suit which has been bid by declarer's partner. His reason for doing this is that you would not have a safe double if there were great danger of dummy's long suit being run against you; therefore, you must have strength in that suit. In doubling you must therefore anticipate the danger or the possibility of a lead through dummy's suit and should refrain from doubling if you cannot stand that lead and yet defeat the contract; but should double more freely if that is the lead you most desire.

When dummy has bid two suits, partner's obvious choice will be the weaker of these two suits—usually the one which dummy bid second.

HONOUR-TRICKS AND PENALTY DOUBLES

A penalty double, like an opening bid, is based largely upon defensive honour-tricks. With nothing but length and strength in the opponents' trump suit one should almost never make a penalty double, particularly a light double. Partner may take the double out, and will be crucified at his own contract because your only strength is in the suit in which he is not interested.

If your partner bids one heart and an opponent overcalls with one spade, there is nothing worse than making a penalty double with a hand like:

♠ K J 10 6 4 2 ♥ 8 3 ♦ J 6 5 ♣ 9 7

The best procedure is to pass. Now if partner happens to be strong enough in the other suits to make a take-out double of the one-spade bid you are in a position to pass for penalties, and partner will not be deceived as to the nature of your hand.

THE MATHEMATICS OF REDOUBLES

A redouble is a double of a double. It is the 'you're an-

other' answer to the opponents' assertion that they think they can defeat the contract.[1]

If a player redoubles and makes his contract, he gets four times the undoubled value of the trick score. For any overtrick he makes he gets 200 points not vulnerable and 400 points vulnerable. On the other hand, if he is defeated at his redoubled contract, he loses heavily, the regular doubled penalty points being doubled again.

The question of whether or not to redouble depends upon considerations of (1) vulnerability, (2) the amount of the contract, and (3) safety.

1. *Vulnerability.* Unless an overtrick can be made, the player gains no more by making a redoubled contract when vulnerable than when not vulnerable; but if defeated at a redoubled contract his vulnerable loss is twice as great. Greater caution in redoubling is therefore required when vulnerable.

2. *Amount of contract.* The higher the contract the greater the possible gain by redoubling. Three diamonds, if doubled and made, score 120 points; if redoubled, score 240 points, a gain of 120. If the contract is defeated, the vulnerable loss will be 400 points for the first trick, instead of 200, a net loss of 200 points. In any close question a player stands to lose almost twice as much by redoubling a part-score contract and being defeated, as he can gain if he makes it.

As a general rule, part-score and game contracts should not be redoubled when vulnerable unless the contract is *sure*, and an overtrick is probable. They should be redoubled when not vulnerable if the contract is sure, whether an overtrick is probable or not.

Any slam contract shows a much greater gain, particularly in major suits. Six spades bid and made count, if redoubled, 720 points in the trick score; a gain of 360 over the doubled score. The added loss by a one-trick defeat is still only 200 points, even when vulnerable, and 100 points when not vulnerable. Any major-suit or no-trump slam should therefore be redoubled when there is a good chance of the

[1] See also redoubles of take-out doubles, page 192.

contract's being made and no chance of its being defeated more than one trick.

Minor-suit slam bids and major-suit game bids score about the same number of points. Whether or not to redouble is always a close question, and in general should be decided by the vulnerability conditions.

3. Safety. Whenever a player is doubled and nevertheless has a good chance to make an overtrick, there is something wrong. Of course, he may have freakish distribution for which his opponents were not prepared; and there is a further possibility that an opponent has made a stupid and hasty double. In most cases, however, it is wiser to give your opponents credit for their share of intelligence. There may be some almost inconceivably bad break of which you are not aware. A 'safe' redouble means that the declarer has taken into consideration the most unusual bad breaks.

Factors of psychology and strategy sometimes make it unwise to redouble, because the opponents will become frightened and run to their own suit, whereas the player is better off playing at his own contract, doubled.

PENALTY AND TAKE-OUT DOUBLES

PRINCIPAL TAKE-OUT DOUBLE SITUATIONS

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Double			West's first opportunity: partner has not bid.

South	West	North	East	
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Double	East's first opportunity: partner has passed.
	or			
1 ♥	Pass	Pass	Double	

In this case the double may be somewhat shaded.

South	West	North	East	
1 ♦	Pass	3 ♦	Double	East's first opportunity: partner has passed.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	2 ♦	Pass	2 ♠
Double			

Although it is not South's first opportunity to *bid*, it is his first opportunity to *double*. Partner has passed.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Double	3 ♥	Pass
Pass	Double		

Repeating the take-out double; partner is again requested to bid, even though he did not have a free bid over three hearts.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 NT	Double

A take-out double, but should be left in if possible (that is, unless West is very weak).

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Double

Asking partner to choose between the other two suits.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
Pass	Double		

West's first opportunity to double spades. The required strength may be lowered, in order to reopen the bidding.

PRINCIPAL PENALTY DOUBLE SITUATIONS

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	1 ♠	Double	

Partner has bid.

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	Pass	1 NT	Pass
Pass	Double		

West has passed previously. Hence he was trapping and doubles for penalties. West should take out only with a weak hand and a long suit.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
Pass	Double		
	or		
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♥	Double		

If West were doubling for a take-out he would have doubled *one* heart.

South	West	North	East
2 NT	Double		

If West is strong enough to force partner to bid at *three*, he must be strong enough to defeat two no-trump.

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	Pass	2 ♥
Double			

or

1 NT	2 ♥	Pass	Pass
Double			

South's one no-trump bid has already depicted a strong balanced hand. The double is for penalties.

South	West	North	East
2 ♥	3 ♦	Pass	Pass
Double			

The opening two-bid was forcing to game. South can bid anything at this point—and partner must respond. Hence the double is for penalties.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Double	2 ♥	Pass
Pass	Double	3 ♥	Pass
Pass	Double	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	*Double*		

West's first three doubles are for take-out but his last double is for penalties and should be taken out only if North has a very long suit.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
1 NT	Double		

Partner has bid.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Double	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Double		

The first double is for a take-out but the second is for penalties. If West were strong enough to force partner to bid game (but not to defeat the adverse four-heart bid) he must have had an immediate overcall in opponents' suit.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Double	Redbl.	2 ♣
Double			

West's double is for a take-out, North's redouble is the equivalent of a bid. Hence South's double is for penalties.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Double	Redbl.	2 ♣
Pass	Pass	Double	

Partner has bid.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠
Pass	3 ♠	Pass	Pass
Double			

South has not doubled at his first opportunity.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Double	1 ♠	Double

West's double is for a take-out. But East's is for penalties—partner's double is the equivalent of a bid.

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Double	Pass	Pass
2 ♦	Double		
	or		
1 ♠	Double	Redbl.	Pass
2 ♦	Double		

East has not bid, but *his penalty pass is equivalent to a bid.*

OPTIONAL DOUBLES

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	4 ♥	Double

South	West	North	East
3 ♠	Double		
	or		
4 ♥	Double		

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Double		

Although by definition a take-out double, its principal object is a penalty pass.

CHAPTER XXV

SLAM BIDDING

There is this in common between slam bids and part-score bids: both are deviations from the norm which is game. In both there is a touch of morbidity. The part-score bids represent dwarfish, arrested development of a game, a sort of cretinism due, if I may say so, to the subnormal 'secretion' of distributional and honour values. The slam bids are abnormal in the opposite direction: they represent an overgrowth, a kind of gigantism, a sort of over-secretion of the 'honour-oid' glands. Both require specialized technique of treatment.

At the same time, slam bids have their roots in lower bids and a slam bid may frequently begin with a bid of one-odd. A slam bid, in order to be successful, must be built on a firm foundation. Even a slight lack of precision in the initial stages of bidding, such as a careless trump rebid or a superfluous forcing bid, magnifies itself from round to round, growing from a whisper to a scream, louder and louder, until it shrieks into a disastrous slam bid. Thus, the sins of an evil opening bid may be visited upon the third and fourth generations of bids.

MATHEMATICS OF SLAM BIDS

In a game of average or better-than-average players, if a player never bid slams he would be a heavy loser after but a few sessions. Although slams come up in about 5 per cent of the deals, or, say, roughly every third rubber, their premiums are so great that they control about 40 per cent of the player's total profit-and-loss column.

VALUE OF A SMALL SLAM IN RELATION TO GAME

The present small slam premiums are so computed as to be roughly equivalent or slightly more than the total value of a non-vulnerable or a vulnerable game.

1. The value of the non-vulnerable slam premium (500 points) is almost exactly equal to the value of the first game.

Suppose a player gambles for a small slam. If he makes it he gains 500 points extra; if he makes but five-odd and is set one trick, his loss is the value of the first game, say, at spades, worth about 420 points, plus 30 points for the overtrick he could have made, plus a penalty of 50 points if undoubled (and it is rarely that a small slam is doubled), making a total of 500 points, which he gambled to make an extra 500 points. This offers an exactly even chance to win twice as much or nothing.

2. *If a player is vulnerable and opponents are not vulnerable, he can gain about 100 points more by trying for a slam than the value of his second game* (see page 339); *and if both sides are vulnerable he breaks about even.*

A blind finesse offers even chances for a full trick or nothing. Therefore, if a player will bid a small slam whenever he can account for eleven sure winners while the twelfth will hinge upon a finesse, he will mathematically neither gain nor lose by bidding a small slam.

It must be remembered, however, that in many cases it will not be necessary for the declarer to take a blind finesse: the declarer has at his disposal a number of plays such as the establishment of a second long suit, a ruff, a throw-in play or a squeeze that may easily eliminate the necessity of making a blind finesse. Hence this rule:

1. A small slam, vulnerable or not vulnerable, should be attempted whenever the estimate of combined hands indicates that the making of the twelfth trick depends upon only one favourable circumstance, such as a finesse.

2. A small slam should not be bid whenever it depends upon more than one '50-50' circumstance, such as two finesses or a finesse coupled with a favourable suit break.

♠ A K Q J ♥ A 6 ♦ K J 10 5 ♣ K 7 4	N W E S	♠ 9 8 6 4 2 ♥ K Q 7 3 ♦ 9 8 7 ♣ A
West 1 ♠ 4 NT		East 3 ♠ 5 ♣

Now should West bid six spades or pass? In this case he should

bid six spades. He knows (as the reader will learn when he reads about the 4-5 No-trump Convention, Chapter XXVI) that East has the club Ace and does not have the Diamond Ace. (He knows that the spade suit unquestionably will not lose a trick.) The small slam will depend on a diamond finesse. There are often chances to avoid a finesse. In this case, North may lead diamonds; or East may have the Queen; or a discard may be available for a losing diamond in East's hand.

Change West's spade holding to ♠ A J 10 9 and he should pass five spades. He would require a second finesse to make a small slam.

Here, as in the question of game-penalty equivalent, the usual argument that a sure rubber 'is in the pocket' while the slam bid is a 'gamble' is deadly fallacious. The person who 'pockets his sure rubber' will be forced to put it up again at the very next deal; meanwhile he has lost forever an opportunity to place his bet (every bid is a bet) at more favourable odds than available to the opponents.

VALUE OF A GRAND SLAM NOT VULNERABLE OR VULNERABLE

If on the rubber game I bid a grand slam and am defeated by one trick, by losing a finesse, my loss is the value of a small slam vulnerable plus 100 points (for an undoubled undertrick) making a total of 1530 points. Had my finesse succeeded I should have scored 2210 points, or 680 points extra. In other words, I have risked 1530 points to gain 680 points, where the blind finesse offered but an equal chance to win, very foolish odds indeed. Furthermore, a number of end plays such as a throw-in play, where a trick is given up in order to gain an extra trick, will not be available at a grand slam bid. Therefore justifiable odds for a grand slam must be *better* than 2 to 1.

A grand slam should be bid when twelve winners are definitely certain and when the thirteenth winner will fail to materialize only in case of a very bad break. This rule is the same, vulnerable or not vulnerable.

♠ A Q 10 6 ♥ A K J ♦ J 7 ♣ K J 3 2	N W E S	♠ K 7 5 4 ♥ 6 3 ♦ A K 9 8 ♣ A Q 5

A seven-spade contract is justified with these hands, since the contract can be made unless one opponent holds four trumps. The odds against this are better than 2 to 1.

SLAM MATHEMATICS READJUSTED BY PSYCHOLOGY

In considering when to bid a small or a grand slam, the mathematics must be drastically revised if the players around the table are of very unequal skill.

Logically, there is no such a bid as a grand slam with a weak player if he plays the hand. This rule is indispensable for the weak player's own protection and benefit.

Regarding small slam bids, there are two principal situations. In one, the player is paired with a weak partner against strong opponents; in the other a player is paired with a strong partner against weak opponents.

Outside of the question of the delicate plays involved in many slam contracts, the longer one plays with a weak player against strong opponents, the greater the mathematical probability of a disaster. Therefore:

With an inferior partner and superior opponents, a small slam should not be bid on an even chance, such as a blind finesse. With a superior partner against inferior opponents, a small slam should be attempted on slightly less than an even chance for success and a grand slam with slightly less than a 2 to 1 chance.

CHOICE BETWEEN A TRUMP AND A NO-TRUMP SLAM

A slam bid at a suit is, as a rule, far more flexible, safer and richer in potential tricks than a no-trump slam bid. At a suit contract, extra tricks are available through ruffs in the dummy; side suits may be established by ruffing the second and subsequent leads of the suit rather than finesse; a trump 'strip play' (see Chapter XLIII) is available. Finally, the entire hand need not hang upon a single finesse which, if unsuccessful, offers the opponents a re-entry and may precipitate a catastrophic avalanche from their established suit.

With a few definite exceptions, all small slams and grand slams should be made at the best suit-bid rather than at no-trump.

As a matter of fact, as soon as the slam possibility presents

itself to a player he should cast about in search of the best fitting trump bid, be it even a four-card minor.

WHEN TO PLAY A SLAM IN NO-TRUMP

A no-trump contract is chosen for a slam only when:

1. The hands have no long trump suit, but are obviously so strong in honour-tricks and intermediates that the necessary twelve or thirteen tricks can be counted by process of elimination from the bidding. In such cases the only danger of losing the slam is by playing at a trump contract and finding five or six trumps in the hand of one opponent.

2. The combined hands contain four Aces, one long suit which will produce six or seven sure tricks, and a side suit which produce enough tricks to fill out the quota of twelve or thirteen. In such cases enough tricks for the contract are sure at no-trump, and seem to be equally sure at a trump contract *unless someone can ruff the opening lead.*

Examples of proper no-trump slams appear on pages 302 and 307.

WHEN TO MAKE A SLAM TRY

A player should begin to expect a slam when the previous bidding and his own hand indicate that the following essential factors must or may be present.

1. A trump suit is available in which there is no loser or at the most one loser.

2. The combined honour-trick holding of the partnership must be:

(*a*) 6 honour-tricks if the hand of either partner is a freak. A freak is a hand which contains a void suit or two singletons.

(*b*) 6½ honour-tricks if the player's distribution is unbalanced (containing a singleton).

(*c*) 7 honour-tricks if the player's distribution is balanced (containing neither a singleton nor a void).

3. The combined hands must contain at least eleven winners.

The player then looks at his own hand to see how many possible losers there are (see Plastic Valuation). He must still determine whether the losing cards in his hand will be

covered by quick winners in his partner's hand. He will find out about these winners in his partner's hand by making a slam try.

The losers which bother the player are *quick* losers which are not covered by *suit controls*. To make a grand slam the partnership must have primary control (ability to win a trick on the first round) in all four suits. To make a small slam the partnership must have primary control in three suits and secondary control (ability to win the second round of a suit, even though losing the first) in the fourth suit.

Partner's bid will show a certain number of honour-tricks. Most honour-trick combinations furnish either first- or second-round control. But Q J x, which is ½ honour-trick, does not control the suit until the third round.

Before making a slam try the player counts his *quick* losers —cards which may be lost to the opponents the first or second time the suit is played. He estimates (conservatively) how many of these quick losers must be taken care of by his partner's honour-trick holding.

If there are only three possible losers, and if the combined winners and honour-tricks place the partnership in the slam zone, the player may make a slam try *if it will not force the partnership to a higher contract than four-odd.* Thus he retains the option of stopping at four of a major suit if partner does not hold the necessary controls to accept the slam try.

If only two possible losers are apparent, a slam try may be made which will force the partnership to a contract of five-odd. With only one possible loser, the slam try is safe even though it may force the partners to a small slam.

The subject of *controls* and the various types of *slam tries* are discussed in later pages.

South	North
1 ♠	2 ♦
3 ♠	?

There is a good possibility that South has a trump suit which will be made nearly solid with minimum support, and there is also some possibility that South has as many as five honour-tricks. Yet North, holding ♠ J 5 2 ♥ 7 6 ♦ K Q J 9 4 ♣ Q J 10, should not try for a slam. His two honour-tricks, plus South's possible five

honour-tricks, may give the combined hands a total of seven honour-tricks and place them in the slam zone. North's four diamond winners and one club winner may likewise give the combined hands to total of twelve winners. But North has too many losers to expect South to take care of them all. It is improbable that South can cover the two heart losers, one diamond loser, two club losers and one possible spade loser. North should not try for a slam but should simply bid four spades.

THE QUESTION OF THE TRUMP SUIT

For slam purposes the trump suit must be solid or must contain not more than one loser. The responder should not consider a trump combination such as 9 7 5 3 or Q 5 4 as 'adequate trump support' for slam purposes, unless his partner has rebid the suit; and even then such combinations should be viewed, if not with alarm, at least with suspicion. If one partner holds A K x x x and the other Q x x in the trump suit, there are 32 chances in 100 that one opponent will have J 10 x x or its equivalent. If your small slam bid requires a successful finesse, and you must further risk a bad trump break, mathematically you have a losing slam bid.

It does not follow that a slam should not be contracted for with a four-card suit. Not to bid a four-card suit at all, for fear of possible unfavourable distribution, would be like jumping into the river to avoid the rain. It simply means that the most solicitous attention should be given to the trump suit in all slam valuation.

CHOICE OF SUITS FOR A SLAM BID

When there is a choice of suits the final trump suit should usually be the one which is most evenly divided between the two hands.

Thus, with two available trump suits, one divided 4-4 and one 5-3, the 4-4 trump suit should usually be preferred. The reason is that when each partner holds four trumps either is able to ruff losing cards and the other will still retain the maximum trump length. When the trump suit is divided 5-3, ruffs in the long trump suit usually add no tricks to the total, since these cards have their own independent value as long card winners.

Even when the same number of winning trump tricks can be developed in either suit, the suit divided 5-3 is likely to produce two discards if a plain suit, while the suit divided 4-4 will never yield a discard in either hand.

Consider the following hands:

♠ K Q 8 7 6 ♥ 6 3 ♦ A 5 ♣ A Q 6 4	N W E S	♠ A J 4 ♥ A 10 7 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ K J 5 2

If spades are chosen as the trump suit no slam is possible. One heart and one diamond must be lost. If clubs are the trump suit a small slam is practically assured, provided only that the clubs are divided 3-2. After drawing trumps the spade suit is run. East discards either two small diamonds or two small hearts; in either case one of West's losers may be ruffed with East's last trump.

This choice of suits applies only to hands in which it is apparent that two trump suits of the required strength are available. When the solidity of one trump suit is doubtful but the other possible trump suit is assuredly solid, the solid suit should be preferred.

THE RULE OF EIGHT

The Rule of Eight is a rough and ready method to estimate how near one is to a small or to a grand slam. The player adds his own honour-tricks to the minimum number thus far shown by partner's bids. He subtracts the total from 8½. The remainder will indicate the probable maximum number of tricks the opponents can take. This presupposes that the trump suit is solid.

At trump contracts with a solid trump suit, 8½ honour-tricks warrant the expectation of a grand slam, unless the distribution is so barren (4-3-3-3 or 4-4-3-2) in each hand that the honour-tricks themselves are the only tricks that the player can expect to win.

The Rule of Eight is at best an approximation and must be replaced when approaching the slam by a precise count of total winners and by an elimination of losers which necessitate in most cases the use of special slam conventions. The Rule of Eight is of greatest value in telling the player when a slam is possible and when it should not even be considered.

THE QUESTION OF TOTAL WINNERS

A good six-bid must contain at least eleven certain winners, and the necessary twelfth winner must be establishable in some suit, usually depending upon a finesse. From what source do all these winners come?

	♠ Q J 8 ♥ 6 ♦ A 8 6 4 3 ♣ K Q 8 2	
♠ 9 5 2 ♥ A J 9 5 3 ♦ J 7 ♣ 10 6 5	N W E S	♠ 6 3 ♥ K 8 7 2 ♦ Q 10 5 ♣ J 9 4 3
	♠ A K 10 7 4 ♥ Q 10 4 ♦ K 9 2 ♣ A 7	

South plays a six-spade contract. West leads the deuce of spades. The eight wins and North leads a heart. West wins and plays another spade. South wins in dummy, takes three rounds of clubs and discards a diamond, plays the King and Ace of diamonds and ruffs a diamond with the spade King, leads a low spade to dummy's Queen and cashes two diamonds, discarding two hearts. South won twelve tricks: four with high trumps, one by ruffing a diamond, two with long cards in diamonds and four with the Aces and Kings of clubs and diamonds.

Hands that will make slams with nothing but honour combinations and the trump suit are relatively rare. They occur only with freaks, pure cross-ruffs or unusually solid hands. As a rule, a successful slam must be fed with one or more length tricks in side suits.

Some distributions are very dangerous for slam bids because they promise little, if any, of the necessary length values. Slam bids should therefore be tightened up with the balanced type of distribution and loosened up with the unbalanced type. With a 4-3-3-3 between 1 and 1½ extra honour-tricks will be required; with a 5-3-3-2 about 1 extra honour-trick or slightly less; and a 5-4-2-2 should be reinforced with about ½ honour-trick.

Not everything is rosy with the 5-4-3-1, 6-4-2-1, 5-5-2-1 or 4-4-4-1. These escape the danger of insufficient distributional values only to run up against the danger of bad breaks in trumps and side suits. Distributional accidents are far more common with the unbalanced type of hand-pattern than with the balanced.

TYPES OF SLAM HANDS CLASSIFIED

All slam hands can be classified into the following three broad types:

1. Hands containing two or more principal suits (at least two five-card or longer suits in the partnership hands), with singletons and three Aces or voids.

The next example is an exaggerated case of an ideal slam hand—a hand with two solid, long suits and first-round control in the fourth suit. Note please that against this hand there are more than three honour-tricks (♣ A K Q and ♥ K Q J) and yet it makes a grand slam if spades break 2-1 and diamonds 3-2 or 4-1.

♠ A K 10 7 6 4 ♥ A 7 5 3 ♦ 6 3 2 ♣ —	N W E S	♠ 9 5 3 2 ♥ 6 ♦ A K Q 7 5 ♣ 8 4 3

2. Hands containing a preponderance of ruffers and three Aces or a void.

The ideal exaggerated case of this type is the following pure cross-ruff:

♠ K Q 6 5 3 ♥ A 8 6 3 ♦ — ♣ A 7 6 3	N W E S	♠ A J 9 7 4 ♥ 2 ♦ Q 9 7 6 3 ♣ K 2

With such types of hands the dummy usually has five trumps. As a rule, the ruffs alone will not suffice and there must be in addition either many fillers or a side length.

3. Hands containing only one principal suit but unusual strength in honours and intermediates, and, in most cases, four Aces.

♠ K Q J 10 6 ♥ A Q J ♦ 9 4 ♣ Q J 10	N W E S	♠ A 7 5 2 ♥ K 6 4 3 ♦ A 8 3 ♣ A 7

When the player selects the proper trump suit and determines that he has more than enough winners for a slam bid, he has not yet touched the key-problem of slam bidding—the question of *controls*.

CONTROLS

At any trump bid you can have anywhere from thirteen to nineteen *sure winners* in the combined hands and yet make but eleven tricks. The hand shown on page 353 has seventeen winners, and yet it cannot make even a small slam. This of course is an extreme case of duplication of values but in varying degrees the principle is the same throughout most hands.

A card or cards that can win the indicated lead of a suit is called a *control*. There are three degrees of suit control:

1. An Ace or a void (with trumps) is called *first-round* (primary) control.
2. A King or a singleton (with trumps) is called *second-round* (secondary) control.
3. A Queen or a doubleton (with trumps) is called *third-round*[1] control.

Slam bids need controls more than anything else because control means *time*. Aces, voids and singletons gain precious time by blocking the enemy's strongest line of attack. Thus, the Time Factor is behind every slam bid as it is behind every play.

♠ A K Q J 6 ♥ 5 4 ♦ A 4 3 ♣ Q J 2	N W E S	♠ 9 5 4 ♥ A K Q J 3 2 ♦ 7 5 2 ♣ 5

West plays a six-spade contract. East's club singleton, combined with the ruffing power of the three small trumps, control the club suit. West's diamond Ace, despite his two diamond losers,

[1] The reader, I hope, will forgive me, but I can't endure the word 'tertiary'.

controls the diamond suit. Once West gets the lead he will draw trumps and run six heart tricks, discarding all his losers.

Just how the distributional values and controls are disclosed through partnership bidding will be seen in the technique of slam bidding.

THE SLAM ZONE

The slam zone begins at a point where a game seems certain and partner's bidding has not yet limited the value of his hand. For instance:

SOUTH	NORTH
1 ♥	2 ♠

South holds:

♠ Q 6 5 2 ♥ A Q J 8 5 ♦ A 6 3 ♣ 10

Though he has only 3 honour-tricks, he knows his partner's minimum is 3½. The total of 6½, with South's unbalanced distribution, puts him in the slam zone.

Inferences from bidding that indicate slam possibilities are of two kinds, indirect (mild) and direct (strong).

Any strength-showing bid conveys indirectly a slam inference. Among such bids are game-forcing bids and take-outs, jump no-trump take-outs, and raises from one to three. All of these show a certain minimum number of honour-tricks which, added to partner's opening bid of one, assure game, and, if the distribution is favourable and rebid honour values are available, may lead to a successful small or grand slam.

The indirect slam inferences merely keep in mind the *possibility* of a slam and try to explore the ground without risking a higher contract than game.

SOUTH	WEST	NORTH	EAST
1 ♥	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 NT will discourage South	
		4 ♦ will encourage him	

When partner's responses are encouraging and show rebid values, slam exploration is advanced beyond the limits of a major game to the level of five-odd. A bid when made at a higher level than game (usually five-odd), or which compels partner to respond at that level, is a *slam try*.

Slam tries are *free* or *forcing*. Any free bid or response

higher than a game contract is a *free* slam try. For instance:

South	North
1 ♠	3 ♠
5 ♠ (a free slam try)	

The five-spade bid by South invites (does not compel) partner to bid six in this case if he has somewhat better than a minimum hand for a double raise.

The forcing slam try at the level of four or higher leaves no option to partner to pass but compels him to make a suitable reply. There are two forcing slam tries, the Four-Five No-trump and the Asking Bid.

The player should know how to observe the symptoms and diagnose slam expectancy as early as possible in order to plan and co-ordinate his bidding long before he reaches the stage of the actual slam try. He must determine the specific winners or losers needed in partner's hand to complete his twelfth trick, and then so plan his bidding as to coax or compel precise responses from partner.

In the Culbertson System there are two distinct methods of slam bidding, the Direct Method and the Conventional Method.

THE DIRECT METHOD

The Direct Method, introduced by the author early in 1928, is a natural way of bidding slams simply by a logical extending of the technique of bidding for game and without any special conventions except the following:

1. A bid higher than a game is a slam invitation.

2. An overcall of a suit previously bid by the opponents is also a slam invitation, provided it is made at the higher stages of bidding.

The 'invitation' to bid a slam by making a bid of five spades, for instance, means that partner is expected to contract for a slam provided he holds some added rebid values, be it even ½ honour-trick. The control cards are determined by a simple process of elimination from partnership bidding, or by the application of the Rule of Eight. If, for instance, the bidding has so far accounted for 7 honour-tricks, then outstanding there are about one full and one probable trick and the slam is on a finesse.

The overcall in the opponents' suit shows ability to win the first trick in their suit, plus excellent support for partner's suit. Notice is thus served on partner that a game must be bid and that a slam is contemplated. With added values, partner encourages the slam by making strong bids; without added values, partner makes minimum bids and leaves further decisions to the player who made the 'cue' overcall. Naturally, such an overcall should not be made except with a very powerful hand.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♠	Pass

North's two-spade bid is an overcall in the opponent's suit. North and South must therefore keep the bidding open until at least a game is reached (unless an opportunity is presented to make a profitable penalty double). But more than that, North's bid indicates slam aspirations. He probably holds some such hand as ♠ A 2 ♥ Q J 9 4 ♦ K J 10 7 3 ♣ A 7.

With a minimum hand, South should sign off by rebidding his hearts at the lowest possible level. With a strong hand, South should bid some new suit to approach the slam, or should jump to four or more hearts.

When I developed the natural Direct system of slam bidding, it was quickly adopted, especially by the better players, and to-day it is probably still used by the majority of players.

Even a few expert players still cling to the old way of bidding slams, essentially as advocated in my earliest *Blue Book*. Personally, I recommend the Direct method to-day, and use it myself; but only with beginners or with partners who have not tried to understand the Conventional method (even though its tremendous advantage more than justifies the slight trouble in learning it). The underlying inferences of the Direct method will always remain as the basis upon which to build the special technique of scientific exploration in the slam zone for precise controls such as Aces and Kings and particularly for *distributional controls* such as voids. With the Direct method there is ever present the danger of *duplication of values*. No matter how precise my partner's bidding may be, there is no way of telling for a certainty that he has *all* the missing Aces or, as the case may be, that he holds the

right Ace and not the wrong one, or the right trump combination.

A grand slam, by the Direct method, is unavoidable on this hand:

♠ A J 9 8 6 4 ♥ A K 6 ♦ — ♣ K J 6 3	N W E S	♠ Q 10 5 3 ♥ 6 ♦ A K Q ♣ A Q 10 9 8

In the Direct method, East makes a forcing take-out of West's one-spade bid, and later enthusiastically raises spades. West *must* reach seven, which is a bad bid under the present scoring, because the odds do not favour it by 2 to 1.

With the 4-5 No-trump Convention (Chapter XXVI) the bidding will be:

West	East
1 ♠	3 ♣
4 ♣	5 ♠
6 ♠	Pass

(East cannot have the ♠ King or he would have bid 4 NT)

The Direct method is too difficult for the average player and too simple for the expert. This is probably its main trouble. The expert player, while thoroughly understanding all the positive and negative inferences that surround the slam bid, soon finds himself stumped by a great number of questions that could be answered only with the help of specially designed inferences or conventions; the average player cannot grasp all the delicate, subtle nuances of preliminary bidding upon which a slam is built.[1] Thus, both expert and average players require simpler but more precise tools with which to measure and fit their hands for slams and thus take them out of the guessing zone into a scientific zone of slam bidding.

[1] It is a noteworthy fact that some experts quite seriously objected to the 4-5 No-trump Convention on the paradoxical grounds that it gave too big an edge to the average player.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE 4-5 NO-TRUMP CONVENTION[1]

A bid of four no-trump, at any stage of the bidding (subject to exceptions given on page 305) is unconditionally forcing, requiring partner to make one response. A bid of four no-trump shows either:

(*a*) *Any three Aces;* or

(*b*) *Two Aces and the King of any suit previously bid by either partner.*[2]

Since the four no-trump bid is forcing for one round, it must practically guarantee a contract of five-odd in some previously bid suit. Simply because a player had a good dinner and holds a couple of Aces and a King with a smattering of Queens, he does not have to rush into the danger zone of four no-trump and hang partner on a losing contract of five-odd. Fate is truly ironical to this author who, having developed what he proudly thinks is the most scientific and precise bid in Bridge (except possibly the Asking Bids), finds that it is costing the players who misuse it millions of pounds a year even at nominal stakes.

As a rule, players should not bid four no-trump until the level of four-odd has been reached by more or less natural stages, in order that every opportunity may be had to ex-

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[1] The famous 4-5 No-trump Convention at one time threatened to disrupt the joint publication of the International Code by the United States, England and France. The Portland Club, London, indirectly ruled out the Convention on the grounds that its very precision in showing Aces is equivalent to playing with exposed hands and therefore makes it subject to the rules of penalty cards. This ruling aroused a storm of protest in England and, as a result, when the New International Code was published in 1935, the Portland Club reversed its stand. The principal credit is due to Mr. A. Noel Mobbs, Chairman, and the Card Committee, whose broad-mindedness and sportsmanship averted a break between England and America.

[2] See page 304.

change all possible information. Exceptions occur when a player holds an established suit, or such powerful support in partner's suit that no further information other than about Aces and Kings is necessary; or when an immediate jump to four no-trump is used to prevent partner from bidding five in a minor suit.

Opener	*Responder*
2 ♥	3 ♦
4 NT	

The opener holds ♠ 6 ♥ A K Q 7 5 ♦ K Q 10 9 ♣ A K Q. He could bid four diamonds, except for the fear that the responder would now go to five diamonds, and four no-trump could no longer be bid.

RESPONSES TO THE FOUR NO-TRUMP BID

Except for refinement in details, the responses are simple and all are easily remembered because logical. One thing partner cannot do is pass. The responses are purely automatic, as follows:

1. *Bid five no-trump with any two Aces, or one Ace and the Kings of all suits* previously bid by either partner.
2. *Bid five in any unbid suit in which the Ace is held,* if lower in rank than the eventual trump suit.
3. *Bid five in an unbid suit in which the Ace is held, even if this unbid suit is higher in rank than the eventual trump suit if holding values not previously shown.*
4. *Bid six in the best trump suit with one Ace of a bid suit,* or with the Kings of all bid suits, if holding values not previously shown.
5. *Bid five in the lowest suit previously bid by either partner* (a conventional sign-off bid which need not show support for that suit). The sign-off should be made whenever the hand has no added values, though holding an Ace higher in rank than the eventual trump suit; and is obligatory if holding neither an Ace nor the Kings of all bid suits.

EXPLANATION

1. Bid five no-trump with two Aces, or one Ace and the Kings of all bid suits. The five no-trump response to show two Aces is obligatory regardless of whether the player has

a much stronger hand (in which case he will have another chance to bid, since partner will not drop the five no-trump), or a bare hand containing two Aces. The requirement to respond with five no-trump when holding an Ace and the King or Kings of *all* the bid suits has its logic in the fact that if a player has such a holding, then his partner must have three Aces.

♠ 9	N	♠ A 6 5
♥ A Q J 7	W E	♥ K 6 4 2
♦ A Q 2	S	♦ K 6 5 4 3
♣ A Q J 6 3		♣ K

West	East
1 ♣	1 ♦
2 ♥	4 ♥
4 NT	5 NT
7 NT	

East knows that West, who cannot have the 'King of a bid suit' must hold three Aces. Thirteen tricks can be counted.

2. Bid five in any lower-ranking unbid suit in which the Ace is held.

♠ A K 10 6 4 2	N	♠ Q 9 7
♥ —	W E	♥ K J 7 6 3
♦ A K Q 7 3	S	♦ 10 5 2
♣ 6 5		♣ A 8

West	East
1 ♠	2 ♥
3 ♦	4 ♠
4 NT	5 ♣
6 ♠	

Spades obviously being the eventual trump suit, it costs East nothing to show the club Ace *en passant*, since he would have to sign off, otherwise, and then five spades would be bid by West. West in turn can draw a negative inference from the five-club response that East does not have two Aces, since in that case he would have responded five no-trump.

3. Bid five in an unbid suit of which you hold the Ace, even if it is higher-ranking than the eventual trump suit, provided your hand contains values not previously shown.

Suppose the bidding has been:

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♦	1 ♠
3 ♣	4 ♣
4 NT	

Holding ♠ K J 10 6 5 ♥ A 7 ♦ 4 3 ♣ Q 8 5 4, the responder now bids five hearts, because his previous bidding would have been correct on a far weaker hand, such as

♠ J 8 6 5 4 ♥ A 2 ♦ 6 5 ♣ 10 9 5 4

With this hand the responder would not bid five hearts, but would sign-off with five clubs. The five-heart response is virtually the equivalent of bidding six clubs.

4. Bid six in the best available trump suit with one Ace in a bid suit (it may be your own or your partner's trump Ace) or with the Kings of all bid suits, provided some added values are held.

The best suit will be (*a*) your own suit, if it has been assisted by partner; or (*b*) your partner's suit, provided you hold *adequate* trump support; or (*c*) your own suit again, though it has not been assisted, provided it is solid and requires no support from partner.

Here again the 'added values' not previously shown are rather flexible. They usually mean about ½ honour-trick, but even a Queen or the better shape of the hand may be sufficient. This requirement of 'added values' really means that you are expected to bid six *unless you have stretched your previous bids on a bare minimum.*

For instance, I bid one spade and you give me a double raise. I now bid four no-trump. You will sign-off with ♠ A 6 5 2 ♥ 7 ♦ K 7 4 3 ♣ Q 10 5 4, but bid six spades if the diamond Queen is added to the hand.

5. Bid five in the lowest suit previously bid by either partner. This is the only sign-off bid of its kind in Bridge. You do not choose the best suit in which to sign off but automatically sign off in the *lowest* bid suit. Partner will, of course, expect that such a suit may be quite unsatisfactory. The 4-5 No-trump Convention is often used when one partner does not know the eventual trump suit.

Opener	*Responder*
1 ♥	3 ♦ (forcing)
3 NT	4 NT (one-round forcing)
5 ♦ !	

Two suits have been bid but the opener must sign-off with the lowest bid suit even though he holds some such hand as this:

♠ Q J 10 ♥ A K 8 5 4 ♦ 6 ♣ 7 4 3 2

If the opener were allowed to use his own judgment he would naturally have signed off with five hearts because diamonds looked pretty bad. His partner may hold something like this:

♠ K 2 ♥ Q 3 ♦ A K Q J 10 5 ♣ K Q J

The sign-off *must* be made when the hand has no Ace; unless holding the Kings of *all* bid suits and added values.

WHAT IS A BID SUIT?

When a four no-trump bid shows 'two Aces and the King of a bid suit', the 'bid suit' must be a genuine biddable suit in the hand of either partner. The Kings of suits bid *artificially* do not count in these requirements.

A suit is bid 'artificially' only when it is:

(*a*) A bid in the opponents' suit, to show control;
(*b*) Part of an artificial slam convention.

Likewise, the responding hand, after his partner's four no-trump bid, can respond with five no-trump when he has one Ace and the Kings of all *genuine* bid suits.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♦	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠?	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	4 NT	Pass

The 'Kings of bid suits' in this case are the Kings of hearts and diamonds, but not the King of spades. North obviously has no genuine spade suit; he bids spades to show control. The spade King is not important as a key card. South must respond with five no-trump if he holds:

♠ 9 ♥ A K 10 9 8 4 ♦ K 4 3 ♣ J 7 5

SHOWING A VOID OVER FOUR NO-TRUMP

When a four no-trump bid is made, and the partner does

not have an Ace in his hand, but is void in a suit, he may bid that suit as though it were an Ace if it is lower in rank than the eventual trump suit.

However, if his void suit is higher ranking than the eventual trump suit, he should not show the void for fear that there will be duplication of values and that the contract will be forced too high.

A void is never counted as an Ace in making the five no-trump response. When partner bids four no-trump, and you hold an Ace and a void, show the Ace, but do not bid five no-trump.

RESPONSE TO FOUR NO-TRUMP AFTER A TWO-BID

When a player who has made an opening forcing two-bid later uses the four no-trump bid, he expects the same responses as when the opening bid was a suit-bid of one; with this important exception:

The responder, holding an Ace or a void in an unbid suit, must show the Ace or void whether the suit is higher or lower in rank than the eventual trump suit, and whether his hand contains added values or not.

With the bidding as follows:

Opener	*Responder*
2 ♥	3 NT
4 NT	

If the responder's hand is:

♠ A Q 6 ♥ 7 2 ♦ 8 5 4 2 ♣ 7 6 4 3

He has only the bare 1½ honour-tricks shown by his three no-trump response and if he shows the spade Ace it will force the bidding to six hearts. Nevertheless, his response must be five spades. The opener may have a sure slam in his own hand if the holding of the responding hand is ♠ A Q x instead of ♠ K Q J.

WHEN FOUR NO-TRUMP IS NOT CONVENTIONAL OR FORCING

In a few cases, the bid of four no-trump does not necessarily show the conventional requirements, and partner is allowed to pass. These exceptions occur when the responding hand has made a jump two or three no-trump response, indicating a certain number of Aces and Kings. In such

situations the opener may have no proper suit rebid, yet wish to make a slam try.

South	North
1 ♣	3 NT
4 NT (not forcing)	

The four no-trump by South is simply a raise to show about four honour-tricks. Similarly:

South	North
1 ♠	2 NT
4 NT (not forcing)	

South shows about 4½ honour-tricks and asks his partner to continue if he has better than a minimum two no-trump bid, say about 3-plus honour-tricks.

Another exception occurs when the bidder has shown on previous rounds of bidding by his no-trump responses that he does not wish to reach a slam contract, but does wish to play the hand in no-trump. For instance:

South	North
1 ♦	1 NT (minimum)
3 ♠ (forcing)	3 NT
4 ♦	4 NT (not forcing)

North made a minimum no-trump response on the first round and cannot have a conventional four no-trump bid.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	4 ♣
Pass	Pass	4 NT	

If North wanted to bid a slam, he would not have passed three no-trump. His four no-trump shows, therefore, that he thinks ten tricks can be won at no-trump, and that a game will be more profitable than a penalty.

The four no-trump conventional bid must be sharply distinguished from the *opening* four no-trump bid, and the four no-trump overcall of the opponents' pre-emptive four-bid.

Other exceptions are described on pages 106 and 151.

HOW TO SHOW ALL FOUR ACES

When it happens, as it often does, that one partner has all four Aces and the other partner has a hand strong in Kings, Queens and other high cards, for purely psychological reasons the player who has an Aceless hand is not likely to contract for a grand slam, because no matter how strong the bidding is he cannot assume so rare an event as four Aces in one hand. The only way to reach a safe grand slam bid is for the partner to show him that he has all four Aces.

The 4-5 No-trump Convention makes this unmistakably clear by the following beautiful inferences:

♠ K Q J 7 5 4 ♥ K Q J 2 ♦ K 8 ♣ 7	N W E S	♠ A 6 3 ♥ A 3 ♦ A 6 3 ♣ A Q J 6 2

West	East
1 ♠	3 ♣
3 ♠	4 NT
5 ♣	5 NT
7 NT	

After West's opening bid and rebid, it is apparent to East that the small slam is certain and a grand slam quite possible. When East bids four no-trump, West is compelled to sign-off, for though he has added values he has no Ace. But when East bids five no-trump, West knows that even a singleton trump (♠ A) in East's hand will give him better than a 2-to-1 chance for the grand slam, and at once he bids it.

Any conventional bid of four no-trump immediately followed by five no-trump by the same player, usually after partner signed off to four no-trump, shows all four Aces in his hand.

OTHER CONVENTIONAL SLAM BIDS

In addition to the 4-5 No-trump Convention there are several artificial slam-bidding systems which are not so popular. They are discussed on the following pages, but only expert players are advised to learn them. Foremost among them both in technical soundness and in effectiveness are the famous Asking Bids.

ASKING BIDS

The principle of the asking bids was introduced into the Culbertson System in 1936 with the full confidence of the author and his associates that they would prove to be as popular as the 4-5 No-trump Convention rapidly became after its introduction in 1933. To us they were quite obviously the greatest advancement in the science of bidding since I developed the forcing principle back in 1927. Yet in 1938 the asking bids are no longer a basic part of the Culbertson System.

That does *not* mean that they must, or should, be abandoned. In the hands of qualified users they will repay many times the time spent in reading these few pages.

In placing them in these pages, which are an appendix to the chapter on the 4-5 No-trump Convention, I wish to make a few facts quite clear:

First. Any worthwhile method of bidding or play, whatever its origin, will always find enthusiastic welcome into the Culbertson System. But it is undeniable that asking bids were not put into general use by the average players, who represent a great majority of American and the world's Bridge players. The average player found them, perhaps, a bit too difficult to remember; or perhaps he was scared off by the idea of learning a group of purely artificial bids. In any case, he could not apply them correctly. Since any system, to be worthy of the name, must be adjusted to the psychology and capability of the average player, asking bids will henceforth be merely an optional feature of the Culbertson System. As such, it will be necessary to announce to the opponents when they are being used.

Second. I cannot be too emphatic in reaffirming the technical excellence of asking bids. My associates and I have reason to be grateful to them for putting us into hundreds of otherwise unbiddable slams, and conversely, for keeping us out of as many unmakeable but highly attractive slam contracts. Experienced partnerships will undoubtedly continue to use these bids with deadly accuracy. It is primarily for such partnerships that the following summary is written.

Because it is recommended that only very advanced

players read these pages, the detailed explanations and many illustrations which appeared in previous editions of this book have been eliminated.

THE ASKING BID DEFINED

The asking bid is an *artificial* bid. That is, it does not show a biddable suit. *It asks partner to give information* about his specific holding in the queried suit.

Thus, if the asking bid is made in clubs, its effect is to ask, 'What do you hold in clubs, partner?'

The information partner is asked to give is: whether or not he holds first- or second-round control in the asked suit itself; and if so, what Aces or voids (first-round controls) he has in outside suits. *He will give all this information in one response.*

Being artificial, the Asking Bid is a forcing bid, but for one round only, and partner's response is limited to one answer only.

HOW TO KNOW AN ASKING BID

The asking bid must be a suit-bid of *four* or more. It must be made in a *new suit*, one not previously bid by either partner. It can be made only when an *agreed trump suit* has been found.

When one partner bids a suit, and the other partner raises it, that suit becomes the agreed suit. When more than one suit has been bid *and raised*, the suit that was last mentioned before the asking bid is the agreed trump suit.

SOUTH	NORTH
1 ♠	3 ♠
4 ♦—Asking Bid	

Here the suit is directly agreed on by a raise and the diamond bid is at the level of four-odd. Hence it is an asking bid.

SOUTH	NORTH
1 ♥	3 ♥
3 ♠	4 ♣—Asking Bid

Although hearts is the agreed suit, had North bid four hearts or four spades, either bid would have been a regulation bid, since it was not made in a new suit.

An asking Bid after an Opening Two-bid:

South	North
2 ♠	3 ♠
4 ♣—Asking Bid	

But,

South	North
2 ♠	2 NT
3 ♠	3 NT
4 ♦—Regulation Bid	

Four diamonds is not an asking bid. The opening two-bidder merely shows, by his rebid, a strong spade suit and then a weaker diamond suit.

RESPONSES TO ASKING BIDS

The following table shows (assuming opponents do not bid) the procedure of the responder:

It is assumed that the asking bid is at the level of four. If an asking bid is made at any other level, the no-trump responses are increased accordingly.

THE RESPONDER HOLDS	HIS RESPONSE IS
1. Two or more cards in the asked suit, not headed by the King or Ace	A sign-off by rebidding the agreed suit
2. A singleton or the King in the asked suit, but no Ace in the hand	A sign-off by rebidding the agreed suit
3. A singleton or the King in the asked suit, and one outside Ace or void	Bid the outside Ace or void
4. A singleton or the King in the asked suit, and the Ace of the agreed trump suit	*Jump* one trick in the agreed trump suit
5. Ace or void in the asked suit	Raise the asked suit
6. Ace in the asked suit with one outside Ace; or, a singleton or the King in the asked suit with two outside Aces	Bid four no-trump (that is, respond in no-trump without jumping to a higher level)
7. Ace in the asked suit and two outside Aces; or, a singleton or the King in the asked suit with three outside Aces	Bid five no-trump (that is, *jump* one trick in no-trump)

Important. The void in the asked suit is counted equivalent to the Ace only when raising; a void in a side suit is shown only by bidding the side suit. They are not considered as Aces when responding with four or five no-trump.

Using the following example, follow the correct responses to the asking bid:

South	North
1 ♥	3 ♥
4 ♦—Asking Bid	

If North Responds:	He shows:
Four hearts	Two or more diamonds not headed by Ace or King, *or* an Aceless hand; perhaps both
Four spades or five clubs or five hearts	A singleton diamond or ♦ King, plus the Ace or void of the outside suit which he now bids. He shows the trump Ace by a jump, to distinguish it from a sign-off bid
Five diamonds	♦ Ace or void
Four no-trump	♦ Ace plus one outside Ace; or, a singleton or King in diamonds plus two outside Aces
Five no-trump	♦ Ace plus two outside Aces; or, a singleton or King in diamonds plus three outside Aces.

Holding a singleton or the King of the asked suit, but lacking any Ace or void, the responder must sign off in the same way.

A real difficulty will arise when the responder holds even three Aces and a generally strong hand and yet, because holding two or more smaller cards in the asked suit, is compelled to sign-off and give up an apparent small slam. This will happen, of course, very rarely but still some provision has to be made for it. In such cases I advise '*cheating*'. Make some 'positive' response.

SUBSEQUENT ASKING BIDS

After the first asking bid and response, any bid except in

the agreed suit is a subsequent asking bid. The subsequent asking bid may be made in one of the remaining two suits (i.e., excluding the agreed suit and the first asked suit) or it may be made once more in the first asked suit (a repeat asking bid).

For example, the underlined bid is a subsequent asking bid:

North	South	North	South
1 ♠	3 ♠	1 ♠	3 ♠
4 ♦?	4 ♥	4 ♦?	4 ♥
5 ♣? (a new suit)		5 ♦? (repeat)	

The object of all subsequent (or later) asking bids is to obtain important information (about second- or third-round controls) which was not disclosed by the response to the first asking bid. It follows that the correct response must depend entirely on exactly what information was conveyed in the response to the first asking bid.

The responding hand must ask himself this question: 'What have I already told my partner in my first response?' The information not disclosed in that response must logically be the information which partner seeks in his second asking bid. And similarly in the case of a third asking bid—whether it be in a new suit or in one previously asked.

WHEN TO MAKE AN ASKING BID

A player makes use of the Asking Bid Method when the bidding has shown that the combined hands are in the slam zone if they have enough suit-controls to avoid the quick loss of the setting tricks.

A player who can see from his own hand that the greatest possible number of losers is three or less, proceeds to 'ask' his partner whether or not those specific losers are accounted for by suit-controls in partner's hand. If there are as many as three losers, the asking bid must be so chosen as not to carry the bidding past the level of four-odd if partner must sign off.

Saving a Round of Bidding. For his first asking bid the player should choose the one which will yield the most information, keep the path clear for a sign-off if necessary, and leave room

for future asking bids if they prove to be necessary or desirable.

AGREED SUIT BY INFERENCE

Ordinarily a suit is agreed upon by a direct raise. But it is possible to 'set' a suit by inference. This is done by *jumping* to the level of four in a new suit. Such a bid is an asking bid and the agreed suit is the last one bid by the partnership.

The asking bid is so constructed as always to *jump just one trick higher* than necessary for a regulation forcing response, provided the jump is to the level of four or higher.

South	North
1 ♥	1 ♠
4 ♦—Asking Bid; spades will be trumps	

Here a double-jump is necessary to reach the level of four.

South	North
1 ♥	1 ♠
4 ♥—Regulation Bid	

Four hearts is not an asking bid, even though it is a double-jump to the four level, because it is *not a bid in a new suit.*

South	North
1 ♠	2 NT
4 ♦—Asking Bid; spades will be trumps	

The two-no-trump bid is a game force. Consequently, three diamonds would have sufficed as a forcing bid.

South	North
1 ♠	3 ♥
5 ♦—Asking Bid	

Four diamonds would have been a regulation bid, showing a biddable suit in diamonds. Hence the jump to five diamonds to make it an asking bid, making the heart suit the agreed one.

ASKING CUE BIDS

When the opponents have entered the bidding, a player may find it necessary to make an asking bid in *their* suit. Since a bid in the opponents' suit is universally employed to show a void or the Ace plus excellent support for partner's suit, a player must jump the bidding to make an asking bid.

South	West	North
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♠ shows a void or the Ace
		3 ♠ is an asking bid; hearts is the agreed suit

It will be noted that this sometimes results in an exception to the rule that an asking bid must take place at the level of four or higher. *When this happens, the responses are still made at the level of four.*

CLEARING UP AMBIGUITIES

There are two cases in which a response to the first asking bid may be based on one of two different holdings. One is the case of the sign-off: the player may have no Ace, or he may have an Ace, but no fit in the asked suit. The other is the case of four no-trump: he may have the Ace of the asked suit and a side Ace, or he may have a fit in the asked suit and two side Aces.

After one of these two responses, a *repeat* asking bid (a subsequent asking bid in the same suit) asks for clarification of the first response.

When the repeat asking bid follows a previous sign-off, the responder should now:

1. Bid no-trump if he has second-round control, having signed off before because he lacks an Ace.
2. Bid an Ace if he has third-round control (Queen or doubleton) and an Ace. With two Aces, show only one of them, for the no-trump response shows second-round control and not two Aces.
3. Lacking all the values which justify a positive response to the repeat asking bid, sign off again in the agreed suit.

ASKING IN A NEW SUIT AFTER A SIGN-OFF

When the first asking bid has been answered by a sign-off, it has no effect on a subsequent asking bid in a new suit. The entire series of responses to any first asking bid may be used.

South	North
1 ♠	3 ♠
4 ♦?	4 ♠
5 ♥?	

Five hearts is a subsequent asking bid, and North will respond

to it as though it were the *first* asking bid, because his previous sign-off has not necessarily denied anything except possession of diamond Ace, King, void or singleton.

REPEAT ASKING BID AFTER FOUR NO-TRUMP

The four-no-trump response to an asking bid may mean one of two possible holdings. The asker knows which of these holdings his partner had when he has two Aces. When the asker has only one Ace, but is not void in any suit, it does not, as a rule, greatly matter which of the two possible holdings his partner has.

When the asker has a void and only one Ace, it is vital for him to know the exact meaning of the four-no-trump response.

Suppose South holds the following hand:

♠ K Q J 7 5 ♥ — ♦ A K 6 ♣ K Q 8 6 2

He bids one spade, and North gives him a double raise to three spades. South now makes an asking bid of four clubs, and North's response is four no-trump. North may hold:

1. ♠ 10 8 6 4 3 ♥ A K Q ♦ 7 ♣ A 9 7 3
2. ♠ A 9 6 4 ♥ K Q J ♦ 8 4 ♣ A 7 5 3
3. ♠ A 8 6 4 3 ♥ A K Q ♦ 8 7 5 3 ♣ 9

If North has No. 2, seven spades can be made; if North has No. 1 or No. 3, six spades is the limit. South's problem is to find out which hand North holds.

When the response to the first asking bid is four no-trump[1] *a repeat asking bid requires partner to specify the exact holding on which his four-no-trump response was made.*

The responses to a repeat asking bid, when it follows a four-no-trump response to a previous asking bid in that suit, are as follows:

1. If the four-no-trump response was based on second-round control in the asked suit and two outside Aces, the responder now signs off in the agreed trump suit.

2. If the four-no-trump response was based on the Ace of the asked suit and one outside Ace, the outside Ace is now

[1] It is assumed throughout that the first asking bid is made at the level of four. If the first asking bid is not a four-bid, the procedure is the same but at a higher level.

shown. If it is the Ace of the agreed suit, a jump of one trick is required, to distinguish it from the sign-off.

CHOICE BETWEEN AN ACE AND A VOID

An Ace and a void are interchangeable in responding to an asking bid *when the responder's hand contains only one of these values*. When the responder has an Ace *and* a void, since he cannot bid four no-trump (which always shows two Aces) he has a choice of responses:

1. With second-round control in the asked suit, an Ace in one outside suit, and a void in another outside suit, show the Ace. Suppress the void until a later round.

2. With an Ace in the asked suit and a void in a side suit, show the void; with a void in the asked suit and an Ace in a side suit, show the Ace.

In other words, always show the control which is held outside of the asked suit.

ASKING AFTER AN OPENING TWO-BID

A forcing two-bid is so strong that it often will lead to a slam, but the two-bidder is often balked by the fact that the responder cannot raise his suit. He then has available the *Jump Asking Bid.*

A logical modification in the case of asking bids is applied to forcing two-bids. We run up against a tremendous range of hands, especially after opening two-bids and other very powerful bids, where partner has no Aces and yet the meagre balance of values—two or three miserable Kings or Queens, or a singleton—are decisive in the success or failure of a slam bid. Hence the following rule when responding to any asking bid:

After any opening bid of two in a suit, the response to an asking bid to show second-round control is:

(*a*) Another Ace if available, failing which

(*b*) The required number of no-trump.

SOUTH	NORTH
2 ♥	2 ♠
4 ♦?—Asking Bid	4 NT

North's four no-trump shows either a singleton diamond or the diamond King. At the same time it denies any Ace in the hand, since the first preference in showing a fit is another Ace.

Of course, with a singleton in the asked suit and only a singleton of trumps, North should not give a positive four-no-trump response.

Holding the King or a singleton of the asked suit and two Aces outside; or two Aces including the Ace of the asked suit, *jump* one trick in no-trump.

ASKING BIDS IN THE DEFENDING HAND

After a strength-showing single jump overcall or a take-out double, the agreeing on the suit and the subsequent procedure with asking bids are the same as after an opening bid of one in a suit.

The immediate overcall in the opponents' suit by a defender is treated exactly as a forcing two-bid as regards asking bids and responses.

When an asking bid is made and partner holds the King or a singleton in the asked suit with an outside Ace, his preference is to show the outside Ace; but if he should hold no outside Ace, he must still respond with the required number of no-trump.

ASKING BID DEFENCE AGAINST INTERFERENCE BIDS

At first it may seem obvious that, while partners are actively engaged in making asking bids and responses, the opponents will not stand idly by observing the proceedings with polite curiosity. It seems that they would and should try to block the exchange of information at least with an interference double.

And yet, to stand idly by is exactly what the opponents should do as their best defence against the asking bids. Let us take the following bidding situation:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
4 ♣?	Double	Redouble!	

West, by his double, is possibly trying to show to his partner that

he holds fair clubs, but his main object is to 'chop up' the messages being broadcast between South and North.

To double an asking bid is the worst thing that West could do, Its only effect is to *add* to North's collection of replies.

To sign off, North will pass, instead of returning to the agreed trump suit. Therefore:

To show the trump Ace and the King or singleton of the asked suit, North may bid the agreed suit at the lowest possible level. He need not skip.

To show the King or singleton in the asked suit, but no Ace, North will redouble, instead of signing off as is usually required. This is valuable information, yet had West not doubled North would have been compelled to sign off.

WHEN AN OPPONENT OVERCALLS THE ASKING BID

When an opponent overcalls an asking bid with any suit bid, he risks a penalty double and a large penalty. However, some freak hands will justify such an overcall. The asker's partner will proceed as follows:

1. If it is possible to respond to the asking bid at the same level as though the overcall had not been made, the usual conventional response to the asking bid should be made.

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♣?	4 ♦		

North holds: ♠ Q J 7 5 ♥ A K 6 ♦ 5 2 ♣ K 7 4 2

North can bid four hearts, showing the heart Ace and second-round control in clubs, exactly as though West had not put in the four-diamond overcall. Therefore North should bid four hearts.

2. If ordinarily the asker's partner would have signed off to the asking bid, he should *pass* the opponent's overcall. This leaves his partner the option of making a penalty double.

The asker's partner may make a penalty double himself, *even though he holds a fit with the asked suit and sufficient values to make a positive response to the asking bid.* For example:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	3 ♣	3 ♠	4 ♣
4 ♦?	5 ♣		

North holds: ♠ J 8 7 5 ♥ 6 4 ♦ K J 6 ♣ A 10 7 3
He should double.

The player who has made the asking bid has an easy decision to make when the asking bid has been overcalled by an opponent. If his partner passes or doubles, the fit is probably lacking and a slam therefore being doubtful, a penalty double will probably be the best final contract. With a freak hand, however, or when game seems certain and a satisfactory penalty doubtful, the asker can either continue the bidding in the agreed trump suit or make another asking bid.

THE GRAND SLAM FORCE

A number of sound grand slams are lost simply because a cautious player, when missing two trump tricks such as A K, A Q, or K Q, does not dare to place *both* of them in partner's hand.

The object of the Grand Slam Force is limited to one—and only one—question: Has my partner (he may be the opening or the responding hand) the A K, A Q, or K Q of trumps, or not? Only this and nothing else.

♠ Q 6 4 3 2 ♥ K Q 7 6 ♦ A Q 6 ♣ A	N W E S	♠ A K 7 5 ♥ A 2 ♦ K 7 4 3 ♣ 6 4 2

West bids one spade and East three spades. It is easy (see Asking Bids) for West to learn that East has the diamond King and two Aces; but how can he find out whether East's spades are A K x x, A J 10 x, or A x x x x?

REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSES

Any free five-no-trump bid in the opening or responding hand is a forcing bid. Partner must do either of the following things:

1. He must sign off at six-odd in the agreed trump suit when not holding A K, A Q, or K Q of that suit.

2. *He must bid a Grand Slam in the agreed trump suit, regardless of the strength or weakness of his hand but always provided he holds the A K, A Q, or K Q of that suit.*

The agreed trump suit may be in the opening or respond-

ing hand, and the five-no-trump bid may be made by either partner. The agreed trump suit may have been determined by a raise, and if it has not been so determined the last bid suit is the suit.

The phrase 'any *free* five no-trump' means a bid of five no-trump which is neither preceded by the same player's four no-trump (to show all the Aces) nor is some conventional *response* to a previous artificial bid such as partner's four-no-trump bid or asking bid.

The Grand Slam Force may be a jump bid, for instance:

SOUTH	NORTH
1 ♦	2 ♥
5 NT (Grand Slam Force)	

or

SOUTH	NORTH
1 ♥	2 ♠ (game forcing)
3 ♦	3 ♥
5 NT (Grand Slam Force)	

Here, five no-trump demands information from partner on the heart suit.

The required strength for five no-trump is simply that the combined hands will produce thirteen tricks *provided a trump trick is not lost.* The following examples of sound rebiddable trump suits will give the idea of the uses of the Grand Slam Force.

Q J x x x x	A J x x x x
K J 10 x x	A J 10 x x
Q J 10 x x	K 10 x x x x
A x x x x x x	Q x x x x x x

The Grand Slam Force is a thrilling and dramatic bid. Properly used, it will offer the only means of capturing an important group of hands.

ELABORATION ON THE GRAND SLAM FORCE

Though they were never recommended as part of the Culbertson System, several variations of the five-no-trump bid have been worked out by expert players in different parts of the country. Most of them, for partnerships which can remember them, add to the effectiveness of the bid.

The idea is to have a graduated series of responses to the Grand Slam Force:

South	North
1 ♠	3 ♠
5 NT	

If North has A K, A Q, or K Q in spades, he of course jumps to seven spades. Lacking them, he must sign off. But, instead of signing off necessarily at six spades, the agreed trump suit, he will:

1. Bid six hearts if he has the Ace or King of spades, but lacks a second honour;

2. Bid six diamonds if he has the Queen of spades, but lacks the Ace or King;

3. Bid six clubs if he has any five trumps without one of the three top honours.

This system of responses works, of course, only if the trump suit is spades. If hearts are the agreed trump suit, then six diamonds will show the Ace or King, six clubs the Queen, and five smaller trumps cannot be shown. If diamonds are the agreed trump suit, it is possible to show the Ace or King by signing off with six clubs, but there is no response available to show the Queen.

Thus, with spades trump, three different sorts of special information may be given; with hearts trump, there are two special responses; with diamonds trump, one. If clubs are the trump suit, it is not possible to give extra information.

As proponents of this special variation point out, however, nothing is to be lost by its use, and often something can be gained.

THE BLACKWOOD CONVENTION

A four and five no-trump convention known in most parts of the country as the Blackwood Convention has a number of sturdy adherents.

This convention employs a sort of asking bid, but the asking is always done by a bid of four or five no-trump, as follows:

A player may bid four no-trump whenever he wants special information for a slam, regardless of how many

Aces or Kings he himself holds. His partner must then:

Bid five clubs if he holds no Ace.
Bid five diamonds if he holds any one Ace.
Bid five hearts with any two Aces.
Bid five spades with any three Aces.
Bid five no-trump with all four Aces.

After the Blackwood four-no-trump bid and the first response (which is almost always some suit bid, because the four-no-trump bidder would hardly try for a slam without an Ace in his hand) either partner may then make a free bid of five no-trump, which is exactly the same as the four-no-trump bid except that it asks partner to tell about Kings. In responding to this sort of five-no-trump bid:

Bid six clubs with no King, six diamonds with any one King, six hearts with two Kings, six spades with three Kings, six no-trump with all four.

REGARDING ARTIFICIAL SLAM BIDS

All these slam conventions have been developed to locate specific cards for slam contracts. The asking bids are outstanding in that they provide not only for Aces and Kings but also for voids, singletons and even doubletons. But none of them is without its uses if the players can handle it. Of course, they cannot all be used; the 4-5 No-trump Convention and the asking bids work well together, for example, but you cannot use the Blackwood Convention *and* the Grand Slam Force.

These conventions are all explained so that the completeness of this book will not be impaired and so that competent players may, if they wish, learn about artificial slam bids which it may or may not please them to use.

There can be no doubt as to the *value* of slam-bidding conventions. Whether or not it will pay *you* to learn and use them depends entirely on the sort of bridge you are accustomed to play. By this I do not mean the calibre of your game; I mean just this: If you habitually play 'social' bridge, with friends or acquaintances whose knowledge of these conventions is either sketchy or nonexistent, you need not give another thought to artificial slam conventions—always excepting the 4-5 No-trump Convention, whose use

is virtually universal. Casual partners would not only embroil you in all kinds of horrible trouble, by making the wrong responses to your queries, or even by passing and leaving you to play in the suit you bid for an asking bid; but perhaps (even worse!) would bitterly resent being lured away from their customary hit-or miss-bidding.

But if most of your bridge—and serious bridge, at that—is played with one or two trusted partners particularly if you and such partners indulge in duplicate or tournament play, you are depriving yourself of a valuable ally, if you fail to include the asking bids—or other slam-bidding devices, if they suit your fancy more—in your partnership repertory.

CHAPTER XXVII

OPENING SUIT AND NO-TRUMP SLAM TRIES

A rare and unusual group of slam tries occur in the higher levels of opening suit and no-trump bids. These bids include opening no-trump bids of three, four, five and six; and opening suit-bids of five and six.

THE THREE NO-TRUMP BID

Technically, the opening three no-trump bid is a game bid; more accurately it is a slam bid if partner has even the sketchiest of supporting values.

An opening bid of three no-trump shows between 7 and 8 honour-tricks and, much more than the opening one and two no-trump bids, is strictly limited to 4-3-3-3 distribution.

It is true that in some cases a hand with 7 or even with 8 honour-tricks, far from being in the slam zone, does not even produce a game; but this is almost absurdly improbable. It is much more likely that partner will have at least a Queen or a five-card suit, enough for game without difficulty. Anything more may lead to a slam if the three no-trump hand is a strong one.

The opening three no-trump bid ranges from the following minimum:

♠ A K 6 ♥ A K 5 ♦ A K 6 ♣ A 8 6 2

Seven bare honour-tricks

or ♠ A K 6 ♥ A K 5 ♦ K Q J ♣ K Q 10 7

6½ honour-tricks with eight reasonably sure winners

up to the following maximum

♠ A K J ♥ A Q J 7 ♦ A K J ♣ A K J 8½ honour-tricks

SLAM TRIES OVER THREE NO-TRUMP

When partner makes an opening bid of three no-trump, a hand which seems to be very weak may nevertheless produce an easy slam. The responder must resist the perfectly natural

urge to pass, simply because his hand is one which he would ordinarily consider hopelessly weak—something like:

♠ 8 6 3 ♥ K 9 7 4 2 ♦ 9 7 ♣ 6 5 4

♠ K 6 5 ♥ Q 8 4 2 ♦ 8 5 ♣ 10 7 6 3

Either of these apparent busts becomes so strong, when combined with partner's near-monopoly on the honour-tricks, that it justifies a slam try, in the former case by bidding four hearts and in the latter case by raising to four no-trump.

Over partner's opening three no-trump bid, try for a slam by bidding four of a suit if the hand contains a five-card suit and ½ honour-trick, or any six-card suit. Raise to four no-trump with 1 honour-trick, and raise one more trick with each additional plus value. Thus, 1-plus honour-trick is enough for a jump raise to five no-trump.

The three no-trump bidder can now pass short of the slam, with a 7 honour-trick hand, but should jump to six with about 7½ honour-tricks with fillers.

OPENING FOUR NO-TRUMP BIDS

An opening bid of four no-trump shows, in addition to the 4-3-3-3 distribution necessary to all these bids, 8½ honour-tricks.

There are, however, one or two hands containing 8½ honour-tricks which are not quite strong enough for an opening four no-trump bid. One example was given before, under three no-trump bids. Another is:

♠ A K 6 ♥ A K 8 3 ♦ A K J ♣ A K J

The reason why four no-trump should not be bid with this hand is that the 8½ honour-tricks are made up in the most unfavourable way. Anything more than 8 honour-tricks in the hand must come from combinations of plus values. In this case both of the plus values are Jacks, and ten tricks are by no means sure. If the hand were

♠ A K Q ♥ A K Q ♦ A K 6 5 ♣ A K 8

it would also count to 8½ honour-tricks, but ten tricks would be assured. In such cases the player must use his ability to count out the missing possible losers.

MISSING TOP CARDS

All the higher opening no-trump bids are based on the fact that when so many honour-tricks are massed in one hand there is only a limited number of top honour-cards (Kings, Queens and Aces) outstanding; *and that each one of them is worth one full trick.*

As a rule, when a player makes an opening three no-trump bid, there will be four (perhaps five) of the top honours missing from his hand. It will be seen that even in the case of the 6½ honour-tricks hand shown on page 324 only four of them were missing, two Aces and two Queens.

The opening four no-trump bid shows a hand which misses at most three of these top honours.

Therefore, when a player opens the bidding with four no-trump, his partner can raise to five with one of the missing Queens (or higher cards), to six with two of them, and to seven with all three.

A Jack is not a high enough card to be counted in raising, except when held in a four-card suit with the Queen (Q J x x), in which case it is equal to a Queen.

THE FIVE NO-TRUMP BID

The five no-trump bid may contain only 8½ honour-tricks, as does the four no-trump bid; but only two top honours may be missing from the hand. For example:

♠ A K Q ♥ A K Q ♦ A K J 10 ♣ A K 7

Opposite this hand, one Queen in partner's hand means a small slam, and two Queens a grand slam. Any five-card suit will make six-odd, and if the five-card suit be headed by the Queen a grand slam depends upon a 3-2 trump break.

THE SIX NO-TRUMP BID

Logically, the opening bid of six no-trump is the next step above the five no-trump bid. It misses only one Ace, King or Queen:

♠ A K Q ♥ A K Q ♦ A K Q ♣ K Q J 10

The above hand has only 8-plus honour-tricks, but because only one top honour is lacking it is a good opening bid of six no-trump. It may be raised to seven with the club Ace. Any six no-trump bid may be raised to seven if partner holds the one missing Queen, King or Ace.

OPENING SUIT-BIDS OF FIVE AND SIX

An opening bid of five in a major suit or six in a major or minor suit is, like the higher opening no-trump bids, an immediate slam try, and is likewise based upon missing top cards. However, in the case of these suit-bids, the missing cards are only in the trump suit.

An opening bid of five in a major suit[1] shows a hand with only two losers both of them in the trump suit.

♠ QJ 10 9 8 7 5 ♥ A K Q J ♦ A K ♣ — Bid five spades

♠ A K ♥ Q J 10 9 7 6 3 ♦ A ♣ A K Q Bid five hearts

Partner may raise with Queen, King or Ace of trumps and with nothing else. An outside Ace in his hand is meaningless.

With both of the missing trump honours partner may raise to a grand slam.

An opening bid of six in a major or minor suit is one step higher. There is only one possible loser, and it must be a trump honour, the Ace, King or Queen. Holding this trump honour, partner raises to seven; lacking it, he passes.

For example, a player opens the bidding with six clubs, holding

♠ A ♥ — ♦ — ♣ K Q J 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

His partner passes with

♠ K Q 7 6 ♥ A K Q 8 ♦ A K 9 5 4 ♣ —

His partner raises to seven clubs, obviously, if he holds the club Ace.

These special bids designed to locate one or more important cards will prove to be, even if a player sees one of them only once in his lifetime, worth the slight effort necessary to understand how they should be bid.

But it is only fair, in this connection, that I give my readers a strong warning!

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[1] The opening bid of five in a minor suit is a pre-emptive (weak) bid (Chapter XV).

When you find yourself opposite a partner whose game is not thoroughly familiar to you, it is discourteous to the other players, and tedious to yourself, to indulge in a long, detailed questioning of each other. You will have no time to mention dozens of conventions and ask whether or not your new partner uses them. Even if you have been told that your partner 'plays a corking game', or is a 'well-known expert', don't use any bids that he must be able to understand from previous knowledge, or that he will have to 'read'.

The opening slam-try bids given in this chapter are standard as much as any bid can be. They are used in nearly every published system and by all champion players. They are entirely logical from every standpoint. If, for example, you held that hand quoted before in this chapter, with twelve clubs lacking the Ace, and the Ace of spades outside, it should be obvious to any partner that if you opened with six clubs you were looking only for a trump trick. But, however obvious it *should* be, do you think it worth while to depend on your partner to interpret your bid correctly? If, opposite a strange partner, you did open the bidding with six clubs on that hand, I would wonder if you should not be committed to the booby hatch! For, if your partner were so unfortunate as to hold the Aces of diamonds and hearts, I bet dollars to doughnuts that he would bid seven clubs with alacrity and gusto! Unless he stopped and thought very carefully, it would not occur to him that his *two Aces* could not make a grand slam for you, if you were strong enough to bid a small slam all by yourself!

BOOK II

STRUCTURE OF BIDS AND PLAYS

Before attempting a study of strategy and psychology in bidding, the players should be familiar with declarer's and defenders' leads and play. The average player is advised to read Book III on leads and play before taking up Book II. The more finished player should read Book II in its regular order and then read Book III for review and improved technique.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE SAFETY FACTOR

Self-preservation is the first law of Bridge as of life. A player must survive with dangerous hands in order to advance with safe ones. Safety, therefore, is the first and the last measure of any bid.

Avoidable loss comes from two sources: unjustifiable penalties, and failure to make the most of one's opportunities. I have tried to show throughout this book how to grasp and sometimes create opportunity. In Bridge, opportunity knocks at every second deal and failure to grab it by the hair accounts for the invisible leak through which all the profits flow out.

MEASURING GAIN AGAINST RISK

Every bid is a bet. To be justified the odds of any bet must be proportionate to the probable risk. The following bid is an utterly foolish bet:

	♠ 6 3 ♥ Q J 9 5 ♦ K Q 7 4 ♣ Q 7 4	
♠ 7 4 ♥ A K 7 6 4 ♦ J 6 3 ♣ 10 6 3	N W E S	♠ Q J 10 8 ♥ 8 3 2 ♦ 10 9 8 5 ♣ A J
	♠ A K 9 5 2 ♥ 10 ♦ A 2 ♣ K 9 8 5 2	

South opens the bidding with one spade and West, though vulnerable, overcalls with two hearts. There are a score of reasons why this bid is a foolish bet. If partner is weak West will be doubled and lose 800 to 1400 points; the maximum he can gain is 620 points by scoring a game, a very remote possibility considering that South opened the bidding. Therefore, he gambles at least 800 points to win a part-score.

THE RULE OF RISK AND GAIN

Before making any bid the player should apply the following simple rule of Risk and Gain:

First Step: Calculate roughly the reasonable maximum loss if the bid is unsuccessful.

Second Step: Calculate the probable gain of a bid. Compare the two. The 'probable' gain of a bid may be points saved or points scored.

In calculating one's risks the player should not, as a rule, expect the very worst: he should aim at the near-maximum. Except when bidding inferences so indicate, it is just as improbable to find in partner's hand an absolute blank as to find it teeming with Aces and Kings. Somewhere, somehow a trick or a humble *trick-helper* will be found in his hand and players who are in the habit of assuming a maximum possible loss under-shoot the mark as widely as the incurable optimist overshoots it.[1]

REASONABLE VALUATION

If I hold ♠ A K 10 8 2, for the purpose of bidding I am safe in valuing the suit as five sure winners. It is true that I may lose two tricks in the suit if an opponent's holding is ♠ 9 7 4 3, but only timid characters expect such catastrophes. Always to expect a blank hand (or a blank head) is disastrous in Bridge. Curiously enough, it is the gloomy super-pessimist who always *gets* this type of monstrous distributions, just as it is the person who is terrified in crossing the street that most often gets killed.

THE RULE OF 2 AND 3

It is evident that the player cannot know the safety margin of any bid unless he knows the minimum number of tricks that he has the right to expect in partner's hand.

This problem is successfully solved when partner has made some kind of bid. By adding the minimum number of winners shown by his bid to the winners in my own

[1] For the Safety Factor in play, see 'Safety Plays', which, when published in the *Bridge World Magazine* and later in the *Red Book on Play*, revolutionized card-playing technique.

hand one gets the total winners available and can then determine the limit of safety of his bid.

The real difficulty arises when partner has passed or has not yet bid. Caution demands that, except for special inferences drawn from opponents' bidding, the situation where partner has not yet bid should be treated as though partner had passed. In either case, should the player 'play safe' and expect a near blank, or should be 'take a flyer' hoping to find partner with fair help? The answer is: *He should do neither*. To expect too much would lead to severe penalties. To expect 'nothing' in the dummy would result in an even greater evil —gross underbidding. The proper solution of this perplexing problem is to be found in this following Rule of 2 and 3:

When partner has passed or has not yet bid the maximum expectancy of tricks in his hand should be two winners, if vulnerable, and three winners if not vulnerable. It follows that the bidder in order to be reasonably safe must have in his own hand the total of winners required by the contract *less two* or, as the case may be, *three* winners. Thus, to overcall the opponents' one-spade bid with two hearts, I must have at least six winners if vulnerable and five winners if not vulnerable.

The following table shows the number of winners required by the players at various levels of bidding:

Bidding Level	*Winners Vul.*	*Winners Not Vul.*
One-odd (not the opening bid)	5	4
Two-odd	6	5
Three-odd	7	6
Four-odd	8	7

The obvious exceptions to the Rule of 2 and 3 are:

(*a*) When opponents do not know how to double for penalties or are just naturally over-polite;

(*b*) When making an opening one-bid;

(*c*) When the bidding clearly indicates that partner, even though he passed, holds a fair hand; and

(*d*) When a sacrifice is advisable to stop a slam.

A REDUCTION IN THE RULE OF 2 AND 3

In many cases it becomes apparent that opponents are not likely to make game. In such cases the *safety margin* of

expectancy in partner's hand (always assuming he has made no bid) is reduced as follows:

1. If vulnerable, about one winner.
2. If not vulnerable, about two winners.

There is no sense in risking a heavier penalty unless, of course, the player's own hand is so strong as to offer a fair chance for game. Moreover, it does not mean that judicious pushing of opponents should not be indulged in, especially when the bidding *overtones* make the player feel that opponents will go on.

To illustrate the Rule of 2 and 3, assume that your partner passes, second hand opens with one spade, and you hold:

♠8 ♥KQ965 ♦842 ♣AQ96

If not vulnerable, an overcall of two hearts can be eked out since the hand with reasonable breaks will take five tricks. But if vulnerable, this is not enough and the chance that bad breaks will hold it to four, or even three tricks, compels the player to pass.

OTHER SAFETY DEVICES

The calculation of gain against risk and the Rule of 2 and 3 are the most important precautions preliminary to the launching of the final bid. There are many other safety devices which years of bitter experience have impressed upon the good player. The following 'do's and don'ts' are essential for proper habits of safety:

1. *Always meausre your bid against a possible double.* This is particularly true against players who are quick on the trigger. Of course, when playing against weak opponents who do not like doubling anything short of five-odd, many liberties can be taken. In such cases the only limit is the patience of the opponents.

2. *Never venture a risky bid when not backed by an 'out'.* An 'out' is a fairly safe bid to which a player can run in case his first bid is doubled.

For example, if you hold

♠8 ♥KJ652 ♦K73 ♣QJ87

and partner has opened the bidding with one club, which is over-

called by one spade, you can safely bid two hearts, because if that is doubled you can run to three clubs.

It is not enough in bold or semi-psychic bidding to have a good 'out' in the shape of a physical suit: the player must have also a psychological 'out' with his partner. He must be certain that partner will not misunderstand him and carry the bidding to disastrous heights.

The stronger the 'out' the more can a player cavort around. When there is no 'out', a good player simply does not take chances. There is always another deal.

3. *With doubtful hands keep the bidding low and thus avoid pushing your partner into a dangerous contract.*

You hold

♠ A Q J 7 ♥ 5 4 ♦ Q J 6 ♣ A J 9 3

and cannot afford to pass, but a bid of one spade would be very dangerous. The rebid, if partner's response is two hearts or two diamonds, is very hard to find. But if the opening bid is one club, no take-out can embarrass you.

4. *Avoid misunderstandings with partner and respect the intelligence of your opponents.*

THE SPIRIT OF CARDS

The greatest single source of Bridge losses is to be found in something far deeper and more imponderable than the transgression of mere rules and mechanics of the game. A Bridge player, however careful and skilful, may still lose if he does not understand the *spirit of cards*.

Most card players treat a deck of cards like a personal slave. They try to build their own desire, fears and hopes into a deck of cards. Their system is—I. The veriest dud feels, at least subconsciously, omnipotent before a deck of cards. He is like a poor driver who jams on his brakes, clashes his gears, always starts and stops with a jerk, whipping his automobile into a mechanical frenzy until the day when, maddened, it kills the driver; or like a poor rider who instead of *following* his horse and riding with it, overmanages it until he is thrown off.

Some players 'push' their cards when in luck and 'pull' them down when they are running against them. One can-

not push or pull the cards to suit his whims. Cards hate to be nagged or smothered with attentions. They cannot be 'managed' or forced. A wise player knows that at their own time and in their own way the cards will start working for him. He has learned their greatest lesson—how to wait.

Lack of true faith and patience in cards is at the root of most troubles that beset the player. The player who does not understand the spirit of cards plays every rubber as though it were the only and the last rubber that he will ever play. He thus loses sight of the *essential continuity* of a deck of cards and consequently misses the true laws under which the cards operate.

This 'eternity' of the world of cards is subject only to the laws of great numbers. In the course of a player's lifetime, there will be thousands and thousands of new deals, and consequently he may confidently expect not only the most probable events, but many of the least probable: the good, the bad, the wonderful and the horrible. Even a player who plays no more than a few rubbers weekly will, during his life, handle from 50,000 to 100,000 new hands—thousands of *card-years*.

The battlefield is not a few rubbers of to-day or to-morrow but *one single rubber* that lasts a lifetime. Viewed from this angle of a *perpetual* rubber, the player's treatment and reaction to the events of each deal will necessarily be quite different from the usual attitude of card players who fret and fuss about the isolated, infinitesimal events of a few deals. He will learn calmly to expect the unexpected and he will never fear that the cards will deprive him of his just share of wealth in the future. He will stop forcing his game, will let the cards do most of the bidding and playing for him. This is the greatest of the safety devices to make or save points. He will then be astonished to observe how the cards, when freed from pressure, with their inner logic will blend the suits and plays into a harmonious sequence and carry him rhythmically on the crest of their waves.

CHAPTER XXIX

SCORING AND ITS MATHEMATICS

The bid which, when compared with other possible bids around the table, is more likely to win the most points is the best final bid. If a contract of five diamonds can more probably be made than a contract of three no-trump, the former is the best bid. To risk a safe game in a minor suit (worth roughly 500 points) for the sake of picking up a few extra points at a shaky no-trump is poor strategy, though a rather common failing.[1] The reverse is also true: not to risk a loss of 100 points or so in order to shoot at the game worth five times as much although in a less safe contract is equally poor strategy, and equally a common failing.

The player first determines the best bid available in partnership hands—be it even a part-score bid. *His second step is to compare the points he expects to score at his own bid with the estimated points that he can penalize the opponents; or the points the opponents can score at their best bid as against the points that they can penalize him.*

The best final bid, therefore, may range anywhere from a slam to a voluntary penalty when by so doing the opponents are prevented from scoring more points at their own bid.

A loss, for instance, of 300 points at a player's own bid is a splendid investment if his opponents are prevented from scoring at their own bid a rubber worth 600 points. His net gain is 300 points. Never mind that the 300 points in penalties are reproachfully staring you in your face from the score-sheet while the 600 points saved do not somehow seem to be in flesh and bones. These invisible items in the profit-and-loss column of scoring are none the less real, as we shall see below. On the other hand, a victory gained by taking a

[1] The situation is different in Duplicate with special match-point scoring, but even here the rubber Bridge strategy should be modified but little and only when consistent with safety.

rubber worth 600 points is in reality a defeat in disguise when by so scoring an opportunity was lost, the opportunity to penalize the enemy's bid 800 points.

MATHEMATICAL REALITIES BACK OF THE SCORE SHEET

The tricks made and all penalties for under-tricks are set up in black and white on the score-sheet so that the player clearly sees his loss or gain. Not so with points to which the player is entitled for making the first or second game. Only a part of the total points is written on the score-sheet, leaving the other and more important part as an invisible item that remains hidden in the mathematical clouds and turns up only at the end of the rubber.

The unscored part of the game value arises from the fact that, since two out of three games must be won to score and collect the rubber bonus, the player who wins the *first* game has mathematically greater expectations of winning the rubber. In the race for the goal, which is the rubber, the side that has won the first game will need but one more game to score the goal. Since the chances of getting a winning hand during the next or any subsequent deal are mathematically equal for either side, the side that has won the first game will collect the 700 rubber bonus *three times* as often as the side that requires two jumps to reach the same goal.[1] Accordingly, the winning of the first game confers an *equity value* definitely measurable in points so that, should one of the players drop dead just after scoring the first game, the opponents are obligated (only on the ground of mathematical morals, however) to pay his heirs not only the actually scored value but the equity value as well.[2]

[1] I receive many letters pointing out the apparent contradiction between the three-to-one expectancy of scoring the second game and the fact that by winning one out of two games the player, so to speak, is half-way advanced toward the goal. Actually, his advance after winning the first game is not half of the distance but three-quarters.

[2] The laws of the game recognize the quality value by allowing 300 points extra to the side that won the first game for an unfinished rubber. It is desirable for simplicity's sake that the future scoring should actually score the game and equity values after each

This equity shifts in value according to whether the game is first game, second straight game, or rubber game.

EQUITY VALUE OF GAMES

1. Any First game	300 points
2. Any Second Straight game	400 points
3. Any Rubber game (both sides vulnerable)	500 points

The 500 points for the third game represent the straight rubber premium, since all of the advantages accruing to the side that wins the first game are mutually cancelled when the opposing side wins the following game. Note also the important mathematical fact that the *equity* value of the second straight game is worth only 400 points, although the player who makes it will actually score a bonus of 700 points. It is here that so many good players fall into a mathematical trap: they frequently disdain a sure 500-point penalty simply to gamble for a fat-looking 700-point rubber, not realizing that the total value of the second straight game is but 500 points. It should be obvious that, after pocketing the 500-point penalty, the side that is one game ahead still has a three-to-one chance of scoring the rubber bonus.

The total point value of any game is obtained by adding to its *equity value* the trick points of the contract together with honour points and overtricks, if any. Assuming that there be no overtricks or honour-points, the average trick value of a game contract is a few immaterial points over 100. Let's call it 100 for simplicity's sake, for the difference will in nowise affect the bidding. We will then obtain the *total* (visible and invisible) value of games as follows:

TABLE OF TOTAL VALUES OF GAMES

1. Any First game	400 points
2. Any Straight Second game	500 points
3. Any Rubber game (alternate third)	600 points

game and remove the unnecessary mathematical puzzle of the invisible score which mystifies so many players. The best proof of how superfluous and complicated the present 'part visible and part invisible' scoring is will be found in the fact that the original law-makers themselves committed during a period of several years the grievous mathematical error of allotting only 200 points for the winning of the first game in an unfinished rubber. This error was corrected only after a campaign by *The Bridge World Magazine*.

The knowledge of game values furnishes us with a fairly precise measuring rod for comparing the expected penalty points with game points and then selecting as the final bid the one offering the greatest number of points.

FIRST PRINCIPLE: GAME *v.* EQUIVALENT PENALTY

Assuming both the game and penalties are reasonably certain: *as between premiums at one's own bid and penalizing the opponents, prefer the penalty even though it may be somewhat less than the mathematical equivalent of the game.*

NOTE 1.—By 'somewhat less' is usually meant a difference of about 100 points.

NOTE 2.—When a vulnerable side doubles non-vulnerable opponents in a low contract, it should be particularly careful to be assured that the expected penalty is at least three tricks.

This principle assumes partners of fairly equal skill. With a very weak partner or with a strong partner against weak opponents the procedure must be modified.

It follows from the first principle that if I am reasonably certain to take the rubber at four spades (worth 620 points) and, at the same time, am reasonably certain to defeat the opponents' four hearts by two tricks (worth 500 points), I shall prefer the penalty. The reason for this decided leaning towards penalties lies in the lower margin of safety of game bids as compared with penalty doubles. In doubling for penalties I expect at least a two-trick set, worth 500 points vulnerable. This gives me a wide margin of safety, for in case of miscalculation the double will at worst produce one trick. Game bids, even though reasonably certain, cannot be based on any such margin of safety.

Another important reason for preferring the penalty double is that the profits for making a game are distinctly limited, while profits from penalty doubles may expand into two-, three- or four-trick sets, and with a panicky player or a distributional storm around the table, the penalty profit may spell a catastrophe for the enemy.

My records of several years prove that an expert player does not in the long run win many more rubbers than he loses. His tremendous aggregate profit comes from the fact that the rubbers he wins are fat and the ones he loses are skinny.

SECOND PRINCIPLE: SACRIFICE BIDDING

A bid, where a player expects to be penalized but hopes by so doing to prevent his opponents from scoring as many or more points at their own bid, is called a *sacrifice bid*.[1]

Assuming that it is reasonably certain that the opponents will make their bid:

1. *As between allowing the opponents to score premiums at their own bids and forcing them through 'sacrifice bids' to accept a proportionate penalty, prefer the latter, as a rule.*

2. *Even when the 'sacrifice penalty' might be somewhat in excess (about 100 points) of the point value of opponents' bid, there is an advantage in so doing.*

When the overbidder is vulnerable, the extent of the overbid should be less than two tricks: the loss of the second trick should not be definite and may hang upon a finesse. The reason is the danger of incurring on doubtful hands a very serious loss of three vulnerable tricks doubled (800 points).

Mathematically, there may seem to be no sense in risking a penalty, since the opponents can score its equivalent in premiums. Actually, the advantage of deliberately forcing the opponents to the *breaking-point* of the hands is tremendous. One's opponents, instead of doubling as they should, may reach out for a higher contract only to be defeated. It is but human that when forced to guess the best of players may go wrong. The policy of deliberately overbidding will thus force the opponents to make hair-breadth decisions, stretching their hands to the breaking-point. This results in gains for the scientific overbidder which, though not actually visible on the score-sheet, is one of his principal sources of profit.

For instance, an ultra-conservative player allows the opponents to bid and score four spades vulnerable—a loss to him of 520 points, since he is not vulnerable. Had he bid five hearts, risking a deliberate loss of a maximum of three tricks not vulnerable, or 500 points, the opponents would have been placed before an alternative of doubling or bidding higher. If they double, the overbidder breaks

[1] This principle of scientific overbidding, which in most books is tucked away in a very few paragraphs under the name of 'flag-flying', is highly valued as one of the mainstays of the Culbertson System.

about even. But if the opponents, fearing that they cannot set the contract by more than two tricks, decide to bid five spades, guess wrong, and go down one trick, now the net profit to the overbidder is:

520 points—value of the second successive game at four spades.
100 points—penalty for down one at five spades.
620 points—total net profit or about 65 per cent of the average rubber.

There is a second advantage of a more subtle nature accruing to the aggressive bidder. The tactics of systematic overbidding keep the enemy under constant pressure, wearing down his morale. When the overbidding is skilfully mixed with real strength bids, the enemy may easily become confused. He may even begin to crack, if the scientific overbidding follows a definite psychological rhythm, expanding when the enemy does not double enough and contracting when the enemy is too quick on the doubling trigger.

It goes without saying that defensive overbidding is dynamite. The principles of overbidding explained here are sound only with sound players, and assume that partner is not a moron. The reader, I hope, will co-operate with me in hiding these inflammatory pages from some of his and my partners.

THE STRATEGIC UNIT OF BRIDGE

One of the costliest fallacies in Bridge is to distinguish between the visible score-sheet as 'sure' and other mathematical gains as 'probable'. It is very difficult to convince even some expert players to give up a 'sure' rubber for a penalty. 'Why take chances?' they say; 'the rubber is in the pocket and if you give up the rubber game for a penalty the opponents will go out on the next deal and then what good will it do you?' The fallacy lies in failing to realize that every new deal is an independent event offering exactly even chances for good or poor hands in the next deal. What happened in the past has no bearing whatsoever on the probability of the next event. When a coin is flipped and the head comes up ten times in succession, the chances that the head will come up on the eleventh throw are still exactly even.

Much of the fog will be cleared up if a player realizes that in the course of his lifetime he will not have played a number of isolated rubbers, but one single unending rubber. The strategical unit in bidding, as in play, is *game*, not rubber. A rubber is simply an artificial abstraction. All bidding values and equities are measured in terms of the game, so that the player really plays for a stake of 400, 500 or 600 points, depending on whether the game is first, second straight or third.

CHAPTER XXX

PLASTIC VALUATION

In most cases, the player values and combines the two hands by counting the winners in honour-tricks and low cards shown by the partnership's bidding.

There is, however, a special method of valuing certain kinds of hands at a given bid. This method supplements the Distributional Count by stressing the *elimination of losers*[1] from the hand, rather than the positive count of winners. Plastic Valuation is of particular value with strong, well-shaped hands and freaks, especially in slam bidding, where the losers are few. It in no way interferes with the quantity bidding and the mechanics of bids, raises and rebids. It only renders them in many ways more specific.

DO YOU COUNT WINNERS OR LOSERS?

There is a great deal of confusion among Bridge players concerning the difference between probable winners and probable losers. For instance, a K 2 has a chance of becoming a definite winner or a definite loser. Optimists call it a probable winner and pessimists swear that it is a loser, but, actually, in this case a probable winner is exactly equivalent to a probable loser.

Suppose you hold:

♠ A K Q J 5 4 2 ♥ 7 6 3 ♦ 5 4 ♣ 9

You can say about your hand: 'I have seven winners' or you can say, 'I have six losers.' Mathematically speaking, it does

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[1] Plastic Valuation and the technique of counting losing tricks must not be confused with a highly artificial method of valuation advocated by a certain writer and called 'The Losing Trick Count' of which it is claimed that 'it is the system that all experts play'. It is a very clever play on words: All experts count losers on certain hands but, to my knowledge, not one single expert of recognized national standing values his hands with 'The Losing Trick Count'.

not matter whether you first count your winners and determine losers by subtracting from 13 or count your losers first and find out about your winners by subtracting from 13. In practice there is an important difference because, depending on the hand, it will be much easier to count one way or the other. It is a fundamental law of the human mind that it naturally tends to take short-cuts, rebelling against twisted 'uphill thought processes'. As a general rule, the player should count winners when there are obviously fewer winners than losers in the hand; and he counts losers when the losers are few and far between.

With a hand such as

♠ A 5 3 ♥ A 4 3 2 ♦ K 9 3 ♣ 10 9 8

counting the losers is a long and laborious process. Here the losers are fluid and indefinite, while the winners stand out as bold, relief-like isolated islands in a sea of losers. But with a hand such as:

♠ K Q J ♥ K Q J 10 9 ♦ A K Q ♣ A 3

not to count the losers first is thinking backward. The losers are few and quite definite, and therefore easier to count.

The same principle of 'easiest way' applies in the far more important question of combined valuation. With the great majority of hands, I simply add the total number of winners shown by my partner's bid to my total number of winners (it matters not whether I arrived at my total by counting winners or losers originally) and the result will give me a pretty fair idea of no game or game.

Suppose my partner bids originally one heart and I hold:

♠ A K J 7 5 ♥ K 10 9 8 2 ♦ 5 ♣ 9 8

In support of partner's heart bid I have 7½ winners—two in hearts, two in the singleton and 3½ in spades. My partner has at least four winners, giving us a total of eleven winners. A game is assured and if partner has five winners and there is no duplication, we have a slam. With this type of hand, however, I shall have to proceed in a much more specific manner by counting the losers. In spades I may have one loser if partner holds three little spades; in hearts I can safely assume here is no loser; but I have one loser in diamonds and two in clubs, making four losers in all. I have already

allowed to my partner the A Q in hearts, and since he opened the bidding he must have one outside trick. However, it may be either of two Aces or a K Q, or even two Kings. The problem that I have to solve now is *how many and which of the four losers* are taken care of by partner?

The crux of Plastic Valuation is found here. You determine your losers and then you *direct* the bidding so as to get specific answers.

I accordingly respond to one heart with one spade, in the hope that partner may raise my spade suit and thus 'cover' my spade loser. There is no risk in bidding one because it is conventionally agreed to keep the bidding open for a one response in a suit. Now, according to the response my partner may make, I shall proceed to probe further with a view to eliminating some of my losers, or stop if partner's reaction is discouraging.

Plastic Valuation, therefore, consists in determining the losers in the player's own hand and then in trying to find out from partner how many of these losers are eliminated. It is not so much the question of whether you count your losers or winners first (for you must always have a rough idea of winners) as the question of *reducing* your bidding problem to the smallest possible denominator.

The next problem is how to 'convert' as many as possible of these losers into winners. Once more you match each suit against partner's and manipulate the sequence of your bids in a manner to obtain *specific* rather than *general* information. Only in this manner does it become possible to perform the complex mental operation of creating a composite hand.[1]

'How best can I picture my hand?' and 'What are the features of my hand that my partner still does not know or has not assumed?' are the two questions constantly present in my mind when planning and conducting the bidding. In this manner the gaping holes of the losers in the player's

[1] To find a valuable pin, lost on the floor of a large room, is an easy task, provided that, instead of reeling around the room in circles, the searcher divides the floor into a number of squares and investigates each square separately, thereby focusing the maximum of attention upon the minimum of space—a process similar to the elimination of losers in a Bridge hand.

hand are gradually filled in by inferential values, and a composite picture of the partnership hands is painted—a beautiful intellectual process when done by an expert, each deft stroke of the brush being a logical inference.

To make proper use of Plastic Valuation it is not enough to learn the technique of mental play of bids. At the same time a player must acquire a working knowledge of the logical *minimums* and *maximums* in winners and losers conveyed through partnership bidding.

There is another point which it is important to bear in mind in connection with Plastic Valuation. Except with powerful hands or freaks, expert players make no attempt to visualize too completely the combined partnership hands until the later stage of bidding. At first they draw a sketchy picture of the situation, a sort of preliminary theory, then they talk with partner, listen to the opponents and as the information begins to come in from all sides they start to fill in the gaps left open by the losers in the hand. This is particularly true with 4-4-3-2 and 4-3-3-3 distributions.

With a hand such as

♠ A K J 6 ♥ 8 5 ♦ A K 3 2 ♣ K 7 3

there are too many uncertain features and probably a couple of rounds of bidding will be required before I begin to see with any degree of certainty which way to jump. But I have already asked myself these two questions: 'What do I need from partner to make game in spades or no-trump?' and 'How am I to proceed with my bidding to make him answer my first question?'

With hands of this type, and they are in the majority, the principal step to take during the early rounds of bidding is not to try to combine too minutely the two hands in mental play (that will come later) but to plan the bidding in such a way as to obtain from and give to partner the maximum of information.

PLASTIC VALUATION ILLUSTRATED

Suppose I am the dealer and hold the following hand:

♠ A K 10 9 7 5 ♥ 4 ♦ Q J 10 9 ♣ A 6

Let us now trace the different types of partner's imaginary hands

as shown by his different bids and the consequent increase or decrease in trick-traking values of combined hands at a given bid.

As your first step, and before I even bid, I proceed to determine, at least approximately, the total trick-taking value of my own hand, starting with the trump suit. I know that outstanding there are seven spades, including the Queen and Jack, divided in three hands. For safety's sake I will 'give' ♠ Q and ♠ J to the opponents and if spades break 3-2-2 I have one loser. I make a mental note that I have two losers should the spades break 4-2-1. In hearts I count one loser, in diamonds two losers and in clubs one loser. In all, five losers or eight winners. I could have arrived at the same result by counting five winners in spades, two winners in diamonds (if the third round is not ruffed by the opponents) and one winner in clubs, making in all eight winners and leaving five losers at that specific bid. I see at once that if my partner holds say, ♠ Q and ♦ K or ♣ K, the contract of four spades is cold. He may have as little as three small spades plus the diamond or club King and I can still make four spades if the trumps break. But, it doesn't mean that I am going to rush in into a four-spade bid right off the reel. I merely make a mental note of the *minimum I need to find* in my partner's hand to play for four spades and with this in view I bid one spade.

1. *Opponents do not bid but partner raises my one spade to two spades.* I immediately try to picture some sort of a minimum holding that would justify such a raise. His minimum will be something like this:

♠ 9 8 6 4 ♥ 10 9 3 2 ♦ 5 3 ♣ K 8 7

The first effect of his raise is to make my trump suit practically solid for, with ♠ A K 10 9 7 5 + ♠ 9 8 6 4, the chances are overwhelmingly in favour of dropping the outstanding ♠ Q on the first or second lead of the trump suit. He may have the ♦ K instead of the ♣ K, or he may have ♥ A or ♥ K Q. All those values are more or less *equivalent*. Should he hold four trumps, ♥ K x x and nothing else, I will still have a play for four-odd if the club is not opened and the ♥ A is on my left, for in that case I will discard my losing club on the ♥ K and give away two diamonds and the Ace of hearts. I am hoping, of course, that one of the opponents will not hold two diamonds and attempt to get a ruff. In any case, my decision is now made to contract for four spades, which I accordingly bid. For a fleeting moment a thought had occurred to me that

perhaps a slam could be tried for. This possibility I turn down because partner did not give a double raise to three spades and even if he should hold the maximum value for a single raise, I am still short of a slam, even on a finesse. In conclusion:

My hand:	♠ A K 10 9 7 5	♥ 4	♦ Q J 10 9	♣ A 6
+				
My partner:	♠ 9 8 6 4	♥ 10 9 3 2	♦ 5 3	♣ K 8 7
Equals	No loser	1 loser	2 losers	No losers
or,	6 winners	——	2 winners	2 winners

2. *Opponents do not bid but my partner raises one spade to three spades.* His minimum will be something like this:

♠ Q J 6 4 ♥ A 6 5 3 ♦ A 6 5 ♣ 8 7 thus

My hand:	♠ A K 10 9 7 5	♥ 4	♦ Q J 10 9	♣ A 6
+				
My partner:	♠ Q J 6 4	♥ A 6 5 3	♦ A 6 5	♣ 8 7
Equals:	No losers	No losers	1 finessable loser	1 loser

The hand will produce at least eleven tricks, and a slam on a finesse. It is definitely in the slam zone. If my partner plays no system whatsoever, my next bid is six spades because in addition to an even chance for a slam, depending on the success of a finesse in diamonds (such slam plays are mathematically justifiable), there is a strong chance that my partner may have an added value. However, with any partner that understands modern conventional slam bidding, I prefer to explore further the slam possibilities of the hand. He may have a perfectly good double raise but may have no Aces. For instance:

♠ Q J 6 4 ♥ K Q J ♦ K 7 6 5 ♣ K 8

Again, he may have something like:

♠ Q 9 6 4 ♥ A 6 5 3 ♦ A K 5 ♣ 8 7

With this dummy, the grand slam is cold. That is the reason why slam bidding requires a special conventional approach. In this case I would make an asking bid of four clubs (see Asking Bids).

3. *Opponents do not bid but partner responds with two diamonds.* Now my hand undergoes a drastic revaluation. I no more try to imagine my partner's hand as an imaginary dummy but am attempting to visualize my own hand in the role of prospective dummy and my

partner's hand as the closed hand. His reasonable minimum will be something like—

♠ 6 4 ♥ 6 5 3 ♦ A K 6 5 2 ♣ 8 7 2

or

♠ 6 4 ♥ A 6 3 ♦ A 8 6 5 2 ♣ 8 7 2

Holding less, he should make a discouraging response of one no-trump. When I combine either of these two hands with my own, with diamonds trumps, and play it mentally, I can see that I will probably lose no spades; I will either lose a heart, in which case I lose no diamonds, or vice versa; finally, even if spades do not break normally, I will lose no clubs because the third and fourth round of spades will be ruffed out, dropping ♠ Q and ♠ J and establishing two winners on which my partner could discard two losing clubs, giving him at least five-odd in diamonds and possibly six on a finesse. Once more we are in the slam zone and the subsequent bidding will be planned in such a way as to obtain more specific information on the key cards.

4. *Opponents bid hearts and partner passes.* The maximum I can expect from partner is three trumps and the diamond or club King. In such a case I can still make four spades if trumps break and the third round of diamonds is not ruffed., Should, however, my partner hold 'nothing' I may then lose two spade tricks (a third spade can be lost but it is too improbable for practical calculation), one heart trick, two diamond tricks and one club trick. Six losers in all. To lose that much would be very bad luck indeed, but to make four-odd would be equally unusual. The proper thing to do in such cases is to strike a middle road and assume that I have about five losers, leaving me eight winners. I can therefore afford to bid up to three spades all by myself, hoping that partner will reward my persistency by bidding four spades with as little as three little trumps and a King, or that he may be able to double four hearts. If opponents have bid up to four hearts strongly and cheerfully it looks bad for our side. One of them will probably have a singleton spade, leaving me at the most ♠ A, ♣ A and possibly a diamond in defence with very little to hope for from partner. If not vulnerable, I will probably now venture a *sacrifice* four-spade bid, rather than let them play for game at four hearts. They may be pushed into a losing five-heart contract or I may manage to squeeze out with a loss of but one trick. Even a loss of two tricks doubled is

only 300 points, which is at least 100 points less than the value of the game I would lose by allowing the enemy to make four hearts.

Thus, with each new bid or pass the player's hand undergoes a plastic transformation resulting in a different type of mental play of combined hands. The hand contracts or expands rhythmically and the bidding is logically regulated by the necessity of gathering, conveying and concealing (from the opponents) the specific inferences of key cards and suit lengths which are necessary to reconstruct partnership hands preliminary to the mental play.

In the few situations analysed above I have left out many other clues or inferences which put the finishing touches on this fascinating process of Plastic Valuation and thus turn every well-bid hand into a thrilling victory of the mind over the unknown. It must be realized that although partner may hold any one of the millions of possible combinations of cards and any one of the 39 possible hand-patterns—still, so delicate are the scales of partnership bidding, the information concerning presence or absence of a single Queen or even a deuce may easily spell the difference between success and disaster.

CHAPTER XXXI

WHAT IS DUPLICATION?

'If one man can build a house in ten days, how long will it take two men to build the house?' is not quite as simple a problem as it sounds. Mathematically the answer should be 'five days', but actually there are three big 'ifs' attached to the actual problem.

1. *If* they do not duplicate each other's efforts.
2. *If* they do not duplicate each other's talents.
3. *If* they are able to work simultaneously.

The experienced builder calculates the work each man can do without being interrupted, and without interfering with another man's work. The experienced Contract Bridge player figures much the same way. In other words, they both try to avoid possible *duplication*.

There are three kinds of duplication in Bridge:

1. *Duplication of bids:* Counting the same values twice; counting the values shown in partner's hand for your own bid—while he counts them for his; counting both length and ruffing values in the hand of the first player to name the suit, etc.

2. *Duplication of values:* Being able to win tricks in the same suit twice—once in either hand—while neither hand can win tricks in a second suit: e.g. a void in the suit in which partner has the Ace, etc.

3. *Duplication of hand patterns:* Exact or nearly exact suit distributions in the partnership hands, causing duplication of losers through inability to provide ruffers and long-card winners counted in the bidding.

DUPLICATION OF BIDS

Of the three types of duplication, the duplication of bids is the cause of the largest penalties; justly, because this type of duplication is the result of an error of commission. Good players take few large penalties because they are almost never guilty of this type of mistake.

They know, for instance, that singletons are of value in declarer's hand only in counting losers—trumps cannot be counted both as long-card tricks and as ruffers.

BIDDING THE SAME TRICKS TWICE

One of the most common types of duplication of bids is where the player who has opened the bidding revalues his hand in support of partner's take-out, forgetting to deduct the winners which he promised by his opening bid and on which his partner is already counting!

For example, South bids one club with this hand:

♠ A K J 6 ♥ 4 3 ♦ 7 5 2 ♣ K J 8 4

In honour-tricks he has only the minimum he has guaranteed by his opening bid. In winners he has about as many if the hand is played at spades as the minimum he has already shown at clubs. Yet, when his partner responds with one spade, he overlooks the fact that his great strength in spades has all been counted as part of his opening bid, and that actually the hand is no stronger than if he had held:

♠ K J 8 4 ♥ 4 3 ♦ 7 5 2 ♣ A K J 6

He bid *three* spades and the panic is on. No matter how frantically he signs off later, the final contract will be about three tricks too high.

THE SAME FAULT IN A SLAM TRY

Another case of bidding duplicity comes when a player, after pushing his hand to the utmost to reach game, then makes a slam try on the same values.

For example:

North	South
1 ♠	1 NT
3 ♥	3 NT
4 ♥	4 ♠
4 NT	

North's hand is: ♠ A K 8 4 3 ♥ A Q 7 6 5 ♦ 9 ♣ K 5. True enough, he has two Aces and the King of a bid suit. But he has already bid these values to the hilt in driving his reluctant partner to game. To make a slam with any hand that would be represented by South's weak bidding would be a miracle.

Beware of twice-told tales. If you have already told *your* story, any additions to it should come from your partner. Usually you will find him ready enough to speak whenever he has anything to say.

DUPLICATION OF VALUES

The one flaw in successful plastic valuation comes with duplication of values; the overlapping of tricks which each player can legitimately count but which, because they occur in the same suit, duplicate each other's usefulness and leave gaping holes in other suits. Through these holes the opponents push their own tricks before the declarer can avail himself of possible discards—if, indeed, such discard opportunities exist.

Duplication of winners is not always disastrous; duplication of losers, unless discovered in time, invariably is. Consider the following examples:

West	East
♠ K J 10 8 6	♠ A Q 9 7 4
♥ A K Q	♥ 6
♦ Q 7	♦ K J 5
♣ 6 3 2	♣ J 9 5 4

West	East
1 ♠	3 ♠
4 ♠	Pass

West has 3½ honour-tricks; East has slightly better than the minimum required for a double raise. Yet a club opening—or a diamond opening and a club shift—must defeat four spades because West's strongest suit duplicates East's singleton. Move West's King-Queen from hearts to clubs; West now has a plus value less in his honour-trick count, yet five-odd can be laid down.

Give West only a slightly stronger hand—enough to warrant a slam try without question of risking game—and note how the asking bid prevents disaster by warning of duplication of losers.

♠ K J 10 8 6 ♥ A K Q ♦ A 7 ♣ 6 3 2

West now sounds out slam possibilities by the asking bid of four clubs. South signs off with four spades, and a disastrous slam bid is avoided, while four spades can be made.

The presence of void suits sometimes results in even more

devastating duplication. Here, for example, is double duplication:

West	East
♠ A 10 9 7 6 3	♠ Q J 8 5 4
♥ K Q J	♥ 6
♦ —	♦ A Q J 8
♣ K Q 8 4	♣ 9 7 2

Even the 4-5 No-trump Convention—or an asking bid, if it should be made in hearts—may fail to keep this hand from an unmakeable contract if the spade King cannot be captured. But at least these methods prevent the total calamity of an impossible slam bid. The bidding must die at five, which cannot be defeated if no spade trick is lost.

DUPLICATION OF HAND PATTERNS

The most unfortunate of all duplication is that of hand patterns, for it may cause a vast difference between a perfectly legitimate count of winners in the bidding and the actual total which can be developed in the play.

West	East
♠ A J	♠ K Q

In this example, 1-plus winner in each hand (King-Queen, even though unguarded, is worth slightly more than one winner) results in not more than two possible winners in the combined hands. Add a low card to either suit and three winners must result.

This alone is catastrophic enough in close games or slams, but consider the tragedy of hands which so completely duplicate patterns as the following:

Expected Winners	West	East	*Expected Winners*
6	♠ A K Q J 10 3	♠ 9 8 7 6 5 4	2
0	♥ —	♥ —	3
1	♦ 10 9 6 5 2	♦ A K Q J 8	5
0	♣ 7 4	♣ 8 3	0

West's hand contains seven winners; East's ten—a total of seventeen. Yet with anything but a heart lead, East-West cannot win more than eleven tricks. In other words, six of these winners have vanished through the sieve of duplication. What has happened to them?

The two winners which East counts for length in the trump suit fail to materialize because, through duplication of pattern, West has six winners by length in his own hand. East's three ruffing winners in hearts disappear because West's hand includes no hearts to ruff. The one winner which West counted for length in diamonds does not materialize because East's pattern and solid suit have already accounted for all five available tricks in diamonds.

WARNINGS FROM THE BIDDING

Even without these conventions, however, the bidding may sometimes give helpful warnings of duplication.

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	1 ♠	3 ♥	4 ♠
5 ♥	5 ♠	?	

South's hand is: ♠ 9 ♥ K J 8 4 3 ♦ A 6 4 ♣ K Q 7 5. Normally the value of his singleton spade with five trumps would be two winners. But from the opponents' bidding it is almost impossible that North could have three spades; in fact, it is doubtful if he has more than one.

Here is another example of duplication; this time it works as a warning the other way:

North	East	South	West
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥	Pass
2 NT	Pass	?	

South's hand is: ♠ A Q 6 ♥ J 8 5 4 ♦ 5 3 ♣ K 10 8 3. When North can bid no-trump over an adverse spade bid South knows that the spades are well stopped. This suggests that danger may exist in some other suit—else how can East have the values for his bid? The suit that South fears is diamonds—and it is possible that North may have no stopper in that suit. South therefore does not raise to three no-trump; he tests out the situation by bidding three clubs! Here are the four hands:

	♠ K J 7 ♥ A K 10 9 ♦ J 8 7 ♣ A J 5	
♠ 3 ♥ 7 6 3 2 ♦ 10 9 4 ♣ Q 7 6 4 2	N W E S	♠ 10 9 8 5 4 2 ♥ Q ♦ A K Q 6 2 ♣ 9

♠ A Q 6
♥ J 8 5 4
♦ 5 3
♣ K 10 8 3

Against three no-trump East takes the first five tricks in diamonds; but against four hearts there is no defence.

CHAPTER XXXII

WHO IS THE CAPTAIN?

In Bridge, one partner must command, the other obey. There never was a successful Bridge team with two captains —nor is the combination of two privates any better. The second-best teams in Bridge are those which have one *permanent* captain and one *permanent* buck private of the rear rank. The truly great pairs, however, are those which consist of Captain-Private North and Private-Captain South; in other words, they are composed of two players who know both how to take control and how to obey! And not only *how*, but *when!*

I have known partnerships where the battle of the bidding is waged not between sides but between partners. In one such battle, North and South were struggling for the mastery from the very opening bid. Into the higher ranges the conflict soared:

North	South
'Three hearts!'	'Three spades!'
'Four *hearts*!'	'Four *spades*!'
'Five hearts!'	'*Five* spades.'

To North the result seemed inevitable. His partner's suit was higher than his, and obviously that hand was not going to be played at hearts. 'So,' he announced, 'I'll save two rounds of bidding. Seven no-trump!'

No partnership built on jealous antagonism can succeed. Bridge, like life itself, must be give and take. And so the question is, 'Which partner shall take command—and when shall he surrender it?'

THE THREE TYPES OF BID

All bids in Bridge fall naturally into three classes; the 'Captain' bids—situations in which the bidder is commanding, urging, or strongly recommending a certain line of action; the 'Soldier' bids—situations in which the bidder is simply obeying the directions of his partner; and finally, the 'Non-Com' bids—situations in which the bidder attempts to

convey specific information and leaves the decision, for that round at least, entirely in his partner's hands.

'Captain' bids include all types of forcing bids, but not all the bids in this class are actually forcing. The 'Soldier' bids include conventional responses, and all limit responses that definitely indicate a minimum. The 'Non-Com' bids are all non-forcing and semi-forcing bids which announce more than absolute minimums but which limit the maximum strength, including the one exception—a forcing bid—the Forcing Pass.

Usually the command rests with the last player to make a forcing bid. Each new forcing bid either re-establishes or changes the position of the commanding hand. 'Command', in this use, however, does not mean that partner is commanded to bid again. On the contrary, certain 'command' bids really tell partner to pass!

The 'Non-Com' bid is non-committal in the sense that it neither commands nor obeys. It places the command in partner's hand, regardless of the fact that he may never have been in command during any previous stage of the bidding. Command may be referred back to the first player by responding with another 'Non-Com' bid.

In the army they say that the soldier must learn to obey before he can command. In Bridge that goes double! When the Captain's command is an order, the soldier must obey. Conventional 'Soldier' responses *must* be given in answer to conventional 'Captain' bids. Even though the responding hand may wish to become the captain, he cannot do so until he has first 'obeyed'.

Listing the various bids under the classification in which they normally fall will help the reader to recognize whether he or his partner has taken—or should take—command.

THE 'CAPTAIN' BIDS

All types of forcing bids. All opening bids, except one no-trump.

The take-out doubles and redoubles:

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	*Double*		

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	Double	*Redouble*	

The penalty doubles and redoubles:

South	West	North	East
2♥	2♠	*Double*	

South	West	North	East
1♠	Pass	2♠	Double
Redouble			

The penalty pass:

South	West	North	East
1♥	Double	Pass	*Pass*

Pre-emptive overcalls or take-outs:

South	North		South	North
1♥	*3*♠	or	1♦	*3*♥

THE 'SOLDIER' BIDS

Conventional responses, and responses that indicate absolute minimums, including:

Responses to conventional four no-trump bids.

Responses to conventional five no-trump bids.

Preference responses—not raises:

South	North		South	North
1♠	1 NT	or	1♥	2♣
2♣	*2*♠		2♠	*3*♥

Simple rebids—forced:

South	North		South	North
1♥	1♠	or	1♦	1♥
3♦	*3*♠		3♣	*3 NT* or *3*♥

No-trump sign-offs—forced:

South	North		South	North
2♥	*2 NT*		1♣	1♥
		or	1♠	*1 NT*

THE 'NON-COM' BIDS

Opening one no-trump bids and all non-forcing responses thereto:

South	North		South	North
1 NT	2 ♦	or	*1 NT*	*2 NT*

Raises, except double raises, but including preference raises:

South	North		South	North
1 ♥	2 ♥	or	1 ♥	1 ♠
			2 ♣	*3* ♥

Free take-outs in no-trump (made over intervening bids):

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	1 ♠	*1 NT*	

Light or optional doubles:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	1 ♠	*Double*	

South	West	North	East
3 ♠	*Double*		

Free rebids:

South	North
1 ♥	1 ♠
2 ♦	

Forcing passes (page 363).
Overcalls and co-operative passes over redoubles.

ANALYSIS OF BIDDING

Perhaps the best explanation of *which* partner is in command, and how the command is passed back and forth, will be given by the notes on the bidding of the hand on page 362.

There can be no partnership misunderstanding if each partner understands the meaning of his bids as they will be read by the hand across the table from him. The good player knows when to assume command and when to relinquish the command to his partner. Knowing *how* is the first step toward knowing *when*.

North dealer.
North-South Vulnerable.

♠ K 10 8 6
♥ A 10
♦ K J 5 3
♣ K 8 9

♠ 3 2
♥ 7 5 4 3 2
♦ 4
♣ Q J 10 6 3

N
W E
S

♠ J 7
♥ K Q J 9 6
♦ Q 9 8 7 2
♣ 7

♠ A Q 9 5 4
♥ 8
♦ A 10 6
♣ A 5 4 2

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
1 ♦[1]	1 ♥[2]	1 ♠[3]	2 ♥[4]
2 ♠[5]	Pass	4 ♣[6]	Double[7]
4 ♥[8]	Double[9]	4 NT[10]	Pass
5 NT[11]	Pass	6 ♣[12]	Pass
6 ♠[13]	7 ♥[14]	Pass[15]	Pass
Double[16]	Pass	Pass	Pass

1 Opening bid. North is in command. '*Captain.*'
2 Overcall. East passes control. '*Non-com.*'
3 Forcing response. South is in command. '*Captain.*'
4 Raise. Control-passing. '*Non-com.*'
5 Raise. North passes control. '*Non-com.*'
6 Forcing bid. South still in command. '*Captain*'.
7 Penalty double. A *Captain* bid.
8 Control-showing bid. '*Captain*'.
9 Penalty double. A '*Captain*' bid.
10 Conventional 4 NT. South keeps command. '*Captain.*'
11 Conventional response. '*Soldier bid.*'
12 Simple rebid. '*Non-com*' bid by South.
13 Showing preference. '*Soldier bid*'.
14 East makes a decision. '*Captain.*'
15 Forcing Pass. South passes control. A '*Non-com*' bid.
16 Penalty double. A *Captain* bid. North resumes his commanding role—not because he has the big hand, but because South's last bid passed the control to North.

CHAPTER XXXIII

RARE BIDDING SITUATIONS

In a game so complex as Contract Bridge there are many thousands of bidding situations. Most of these can be classified according to type and grouped under one general principle or another. Some require their own independent treatment. Even in a book as nearly complete as this one the rules of bidding that are given leave some questions still in doubt. As each difficult problem arises in the course of the bidding a player will discover that despite his knowledge of bidding principles he does not quite know what action to take.

In the following pages are illustrated certain situations not specifically covered elsewhere.

THE FORCING PASS

In one of the rarest of the beautiful bidding situations, a pass is used as a forcing bid.

This occurs when one partnership has by a series of strength-showing bids definitely established the fact that it holds the balance of power. At some point later in the bidding an opponent makes an obvious sacrifice bid—designed to accept a penalty of less value than the impending game or slam. A pass by the next player must be construed as forcing. He does not know whether the best course is to double for penalties or to bid again, and he wishes to leave the decision to his partner, who may be in a better position to judge.

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	3 ♣	3 ♦
3 ♠	4 ♦	4 NT	5 ♦
6 ♣	6 ♦	Pass!	

North holds:

♠ A 6 ♥ A K ♦ 7 3 2 ♣ K Q J 8 4 3

He knows the grand slam can be made in clubs if South holds

the club Ace and a void in diamonds, and that otherwise it will be necessary to double six diamonds and collect whatever penalty is available. When the bidding comes around to South he must either bid seven clubs or double, but he must not pass.

In rare cases the fact that there is a part-score turns a pass into a forcing bid.

In the following situation, East and West have a part-score of 40 and North-South have a part-score of 60.

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	1 NT	2 ♣	Pass!

Obviously, East would not have opened the bidding fourth hand if he intended to let his opponents play at a two-club contract and get a game if they made it. West's no-trump take-out may have been a trap bid and East passes to allow West to make a penalty double of two clubs if he wishes to do so. If West cannot double, he must bid something.

GENUINE BIDS IN THE OPPONENTS' SUIT

A bid in a suit the opponents have already bid is usually a conventional forcing bid rather than a genuine suit bid. But there are rare cases in which a player wishes to play the hand in a suit which has already been bid against him. A bid in the opponents' suit expresses a desire to play in that suit when the player (or his partner) has:

(*a*) Previously made a take-out or penalty double of the opponents' suit.

(*b*) Passed at a previous opportunity, provided his partner has also passed.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Double	Pass	1 ♠
Pass	2 ♥		

West has a genuine strong heart suit and is willing to play the hand there.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	1 ♠	Double	2 ♦
Pass	Pass	2 ♠	

or

1 ♥	1 ♠	Double	2 ♦
2 ♣			

In either of these cases the two-spade bid shows a genuine spade suit. North's suit must be very long and strong in the first instance; South's suit in the second example is probably only a fair four-card suit, for North's penalty double has implied that he holds strength and probably length in spades.

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT	Pass
Pass	2 ♠		

Were it West's purpose to make a forcing bid, he could have bid two spades over one spade immediately. Evidently, he first made a trap pass of one spade, having a strong spade suit and hoping for a chance to make a penalty double of a spade contract later. Since this opportunity was not offered, he now wishes to play the hand in spades himself.

LARGE AND SMALL SWINGS

Sometimes a player willingly accepts a loss rather than try for a possible gain.

The typical case is one in which a player can pass an opposing slam contract and take a chance at beating it; or make a sacrifice bid and accept a small penalty.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	1 ♠	3 ♥	3 ♠
4 ♣?	4 ♠	4 NT	5 ♠
7 ♥			

West holds ♠ K 10 8 7 6 4 3 2 ♥ Q 8 6 ♦ — ♣ 8 2. West's Queen of hearts has a good chance to win a trick and defeat the grand slam. On the other hand, the opponents' vulnerable grand slam gives them 2410 points if they make it. West, not vulnerable, can surely avoid this by bidding seven spades, at which contract he is unlikely to be defeated more than 300 points. He bids seven spades.

A SACRIFICE DOUBLE

In match-point duplicate games, where every 10 points count, a player can often gain by doubling a contract which

he knows his opponents will redouble and make with an overtrick!

South	West	North	East
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	5 ♦	

East holds ♠ 9 7 6 3 ♥ 10 4 ♦ 8 6 2 ♣ J 10 8 5. West's consistent passing, plus the strong bidding of North and South, convince him not only that his opponents can make a slam, but that South will surely bid six diamonds at his next opportunity to bid. Therefore East doubles five diamonds.

South is far more likely to redouble than to take out a doubled contract of five-odd into a small slam in the same suit. For all South knows, East has a good defensive hand and can come very close to defeating even the game contract.

If North-South bid and make six diamonds, not vulnerable, they score 920 points; vulnerable, 1370 points.

If they make five diamonds redoubled with one overtrick, they score 900 points not vulnerable and 1300 points vulnerable.

The net gain of East's double, if South redoubles, will be 20 points or 70 points, depending on vulnerability.

CHAPTER XXXIV

MATCH-POINT DUPLICATE PLAY

The foundation of a bidding system, and its philosophy, rest squarely on Rubber Bridge scoring. The safety devices to be observed, the risks that legitimately may be taken must be delicately weighed against the ever-present factor, the rubber bonus.

Therefore, the moment rubbers cease to exist, as in match-point Duplicate play, there must be a readjustment of bidding and playing philosophy.

It will be taken for granted that the *modus operandi* of Duplicate Bridge is known to every reader. The most graphic presentation of match-point scoring is by means of the typical travelling-score-sheet shown on the next page. Studying it, we find marked thereon the various contracts at which one certain hand was played at eight different tables. We find that top-score (7 match-points) went to the North-South pair that fulfilled a six-spade contract, while bottom score (0) was given the particular North-South team that contracted for, but failed to make, a small slam in hearts.

Running our eyes down the North-South column, we note that 6 match-points (only 1 less than the 7 top) were earned by a team that collected 730 points less than the top pair. We need look no further to appreciate the enormous difference in *objective* between match-point and rubber play, and to draw certain vital conclusions.

In rubber Bridge it is usually proper to make a bid or play which can cost you only 200 points if it fails, but can gain 500 points for you if it succeeds. *Not so in Duplicate.* You may not need those 500 points. If you can score 10 points more than the other pairs, you have done as well as though you beat them by 500 points. Your problems would be immeasurably simplified if you could *know* what these other teams are doing.

FORM 134

TRAVELLING SCORE

Mitchell
or Howell

Board No. **30**

N-S No.	*E-W No.*	*CONTRACT*	*N-S Plus*	*N-S Minus*	*E-W M.P.*	*N-S M.P.*
1	16	*6♥–North*		100		0
2					1	
3	15	*6♠–South*	1430			7
4	7	*4♥–North*	650			2
5					3½	
6	5	*4♠–South*	680			3½
7					5	
8	13	*3 NT–South*	690			5
9					3½	
10					6	
11	10	*5♦ dbld–East*	500			1
12	2	*6♦ dbld–East*	700			6
13					2	
14	9	*4♠–South*	680			3½
15					0	
16					7	

OPENING BIDS

Since the competition for even a few points must be keener than in Rubber Bridge, the entire scale of bidding requirements, with the exception of a few conventional bids, must be readjusted. There need be no prospect of a game to justify opening the bidding, hence with little more than a strong trump suit (particularly a major-suit) an opening one-bid is in order. In third or fourth[1] position (partner having passed) honour-trick requirements should be shaded down to as little as 1½ tricks with a good suit. The following hands are strategically good third-hand bids in a match-point game:

♠ J 10 8 ♥ A K Q 9 6 ♦ 5 4 ♣ 6 4 2
♠ 3 2 ♥ 6 ♦ A J 9 8 5 ♣ K 10 8 4 2
♠ 8 ♥ A 10 9 8 6 4 ♦ 6 3 ♣ Q 10 8 4

Obviously, it would be futile to open the bidding on such hands if one had to fear not only the opponents but one's partner as well.

'Giving a partner leeway' is simply this: recognizing the *possibility* that he has opened the bidding not for game but for another reason, which may be—

(*a*) Bidding and making a less-than-game contract.
(*b*) Laying the ground-work for a defensive contract.
(*c*) Using psychic or semi-psychic tactics to bluff the opponents out of a part-score or game bid.

Practical application of the leeway principle involves gingerly raising a third- or fourth-hand bid until such time as the opening bidder himself makes it plain that his was no 'match-point bid' but an honest declaration of values. Thus, if you have passed first hand with such a holding as:

♠ Q 10 8 6 3 ♥ 6 ♦ K 9 6 3 2 ♣ 10 5

and your partner opens the bidding with one spade, third hand, the proper Rubber-Bridge response of four spades becomes decidedly improper. Two spades is a much better

[1] For purposes of simplification and clarity, third- and fourth-hand bids are treated as in the same category. Actually, some hands that are weak defensively should be opened third hand but passed fourth hand. The examples shown fall into this class.

match-point bid: it allows great leeway for partner's third-hand opening and at the same time reserves a possible sacrifice manœuvre until the need for it becomes apparent.[1]

Paradoxically perhaps, the caution that should be observed in raising partner's bid when the opponents do not enter the auction should give way to aggressiveness in *competitive* bidding.

For example, suppose you are first hand, and hold:

♠ Q 10 9 5 ♥ 6 3 2 ♦ K J 4 ♣ 5 4 2

You pass, second hand passes, your partner opens with one spade, and fourth hand overcalls with two hearts. In Rubber Bridge, you now have a good sound pass! But in match-point Duplicate, there is too grave a chance that the opponents will play and make their less-than-game contract. With such a hand, therefore, Duplicate strategy calls for an immediate raise to two spades.

In Duplicate, it is often wise to stop short of game bids, even when they depend merely on the success of one finesse, or any other 50 per cent chance. A bonus of 50 points is given for making a part-score. This is a powerful consideration. For example, if you make a contract of three clubs, you score 60 points in tricks plus 50 points bonus, and your total on the hand of 110 points will win for you over pairs which choose, let us say, to double their opponents at two spades, not vulnerable, and set them one trick (100 points). But the score of 110 points for making three clubs is not so good as 120 points (70 plus 50) scored for making only *two* no-trump. Hence a no-trump contract should be preferred to any suit contract, when consistent with safety.

Holding four or five honours in one hand does not count at match-point Duplicate, another factor in favour of the no-trump contract.

Jump take-outs (forcing) should be made whenever holding the requirements, because in Duplicate the opening

[1] Since each hand stands alone in Duplicate, sacrifices may be reduced to a strict mathematical basis. Thus, a 500-point sacrifice is too much to pay in lieu of opponents' non-vulnerable game, which is worth 400 to 460 points, but is well worth while against a vulnerable game.

hand, with a shaded bid, is permitted to *pass* a suit take-out, a double raise, or a two-no-trump take-out, which in Rubber Bridge would be forcing.

DEFENSIVE BIDDING

The Culbertson Rule of Two and Three, governing defenders' overcalls, is far and away the most accurate that can be devised to apply to Rubber Bridge. In Duplicate, the eternal skirmishing over low contracts calls for drastic revision of this safety factor. Suppose both sides are vulnerable, South, the dealer, bids one spade and you hold:

♠ 6 4 2 ♥ A K 7 6 5 ♦ A 5 ♣ 7 4 2

In Rubber Bridge, using the Rule of Two and Three, you would not dream of overcalling with two hearts. In Duplicate, it is quite another matter. Two considerations must guide your decision: the battle for a part-score and (more important) the fact that *most* of the players who hold your cards will bid rather than pass. This latter statement demands a bit of explaining. *It does not pay to play the Lone Wolf at Duplicate, aiming at top or bottom scores!* My invariable injunction to Duplicate players is 'take care of your bottoms, and the opponents will take care of your tops!' Like other jests, this one contains more than a grain of wisdom; in fact, I consider it the soundest possible policy in Duplicate.

The question of slams is a much simpler one in match-point contests than in Rubber Bridge. The answer is, briefly and succinctly 'don't bid them unless they are almost sure things!' If you fail to bid a slam that you actually make in play, the chances are that you will have lots of company among teams sitting your way at the table, and in that case your match-point score will not suffer greatly. If, on the other hand, you bid for a slam that fails to materialize, you will find yourself either a Lone Wolf, or among an unselect few; in either case your match-points on that hand will be very anæmic.

Pre-emptive bids should be very sparingly used, since there is always the chance that the contract may be bought at a lower level than the pre-empt itself.

Penalty doubles should be made on a greatly reduced

margin of safety. When a one-trick set appears probable and your side could have made a part-score but cannot make any higher contract, you should not restrain yourself from doubling merely because failure to defeat the contract will result in a game for the opponents.

PHILOSOPHY OF PLAY

The differences *in play* at match-points can be summarized very briefly, yet fully.

As declarer, first try to *appraise* the contract you have reached. If you decide that you are in a contract that will be general around the room, insure it by safety-methods if you can but at the same time look around for the possibility of extra tricks. If you are sure that your contract is too high, throw safety-plays to the winds—try any device, however remote, to *fulfil* the contract, since it will probably be just as bad to go down one trick as five. If, however, you feel reasonably certain that you are playing an excellent contract and one that will not be reached by many other pairs, forget about over-tricks! Bring home the contract!

On defence, you must not ignore over-tricks in a desperate plan to defeat the contract! Such a philosophy is splendid at Rubber Bridge but fatal at Duplicate.

And even if you are defending against a miserable two-club contract, don't let 'em make three!

CHAPTER XXXV

PSYCHOLOGY AND TACTICS

While it cannot be denied that there is truth in the adage 'God is on the side of the heavier artillery', it is of great importance to remember that artillery cannot place itself strategically, nor automatically time its firing to the highest degree of effectiveness.

So in Bridge, a preponderance of high cards does not necessarily ensure victory. It must always be borne in mind that Bridge, in its perfect simulation of warfare, provides opportunities for strategic, non-catastrophic retreats. To allow the enemy to withdraw is simply to offer him another battle, perhaps on ground advantageous to him. To penalize the opponents, unless the profit is at least equivalent to that voluntarily abandoned or forcibly snatched away, is defeat —not victory. This question of counter-compensation pervades the entire structure of competitive bidding.

Psychology at Bridge can best be defined as the process of taking into consideration the *personal* element involved, viz. the tendencies, idiosyncracies and reactions of specific partners and specific opponents.

PART-SCORE TECHNIQUE

No single factor contributes as much to the psychological and tactical side of bridge as part-score situations.

First, we must establish a sound policy concerning opening bids with and against a part-score. There is widespread misunderstanding on this point. The average conception is that since a low contract means game, weak hands should be opened on advanced part-scores.

The superficiality of this idea is apparent to anyone who will take the trouble to delve further. The most determined defence is waged against part-score situations. It follows, since the possessor of a part-score *knows* he will be 'pushed', that he must be well prepared for this pushing. Nothing is more humiliating than to have one's opponents, in their

indefatigable 'defence' against a part-score, get reluctantly up to a game contract—and make it! Besides, there is partner's natural greed to be considered; he will give up a chance for game only with great reluctance.

Shade your opening bids downward if your opponents have a part-score, and upwards if you hold the part-score.

OPENING AGAINST A PART-SCORE

Let us consider a typical minimum bid from two angles.

♠ A K 8 6 ♥ A 7 5 ♦ 6 3 2 ♣ 8 5 4

If the holder of this hand has a part-score, he is inviting defeat—possibly rout—by opening the bidding. He will have not only the opponents, but his own partner 'pushing' him. He will not, of course, make another bid, but if partner holds a fair hand he will never be satisfied before the three level, at least, is reached. And he will need a great deal better than a 'fair' hand for this 'minny' to bring in nine tricks!

Now for the other angle—opening the same hand *against* opponents' part-score.

It must be observed that, defensively, the hand is fully up to standard: that it should take three tricks against any adverse contract. Offensively, however, it is weak. If we do not open the bidding the opponents may, and our 3½ or 4 winners will not allow us to take action at a one 'push'. It is entirely likely that they will romp home at a low contract, and that an opening bid by us would have insured their being at least one trick *higher*; possibly, that one trick too many!

PANICKY BIDDING

The reaction of ninety players in a hundred, when faced with opponents' part-score, is to rush in and fight, regardless of position, and almost regardless of holding. Partners are forgotten: each feels that he and only he must be Horatio at the Bridge. Let us take one of the most typical situations. Both sides vulnerable, East-West 40 part-score, the bidding has gone: North, one spade; East, two hearts; South holds

♠ A 6 3 ♥ 7 5 2 ♦ Q 6 3 ♣ 5 4 3 2

and on the hysterical theory that the opponents are about to take the rubber with a measly two-heart contract, he bids two spades. The fact that he would not make this bid

without the part-score menace, that he would not even make it over a pass by East, is of no consequence to him; he hopes that partner, in some clairvoyant way, will read this perfectly free raise for what it is, panic!

Quite obviously, no player, however expert, in the North position can tell whether the raise was sound or hysterical. Holding such a hand as

♠ K Q J 9 7 5 ♥ 6 4 ♦ A 10 ♣ A J 6

he cannot *assume* that South's raise was so bad that there will be no play whatever for four spades; to bid less than four on the second round would be ridiculously conservative. But in any event, whether or not he *guesses* how good or how bad the raise was, quite obviously chaos has taken the place of system.

Thus, since a direct or free raise of partner's opening bid over an intervening bid is strength-showing, it remains that at all times, part-score or no part-score. It is not the responding hand's province to 'take charge' and rush in with a defensive bid. The partner who opened the bidding was well aware of the condition of the score; it is very unlikely that a simple overcall will confound him. In all probability he has planned a rebid or a take-out double to meet this very contingency. But even admitting that South's fears are well grounded—admitting that North will be unable to defend—what then? Why, simply this: that North and South had better pack up their tent; that if North's hand is not strong enough to defend, a free raise by South on his garbage is begging for disaster!

It is unavoidable that a part-score menace must influence the bidding, but only to induce the slightest of *shadings*. Thus if North bids one spade and West, with a 60 part-score, overcalls with two diamonds, South is more or less forced to raise on such a questionable holding as

♠ Q 10 6 5 ♥ K 8 6 ♦ 5 4 2 ♣ Q J 8

It will be noted that even this shaded free raise has more winners than the miserable one in the raise I showed before. It naturally follows, on part-score situations, that the opening bidder must make some *slight* allowance for possible shading by partner.

TAKE-OUT DOUBLES AGAINST PART-SCORE BIDS

When the opponents bid to an advanced part-score neither trapping nor procrastinating tactics can be employed. *One of the most important functions of expert bidding is to relieve a partner from the intolerable burden of guesses and decisions.* Consider this situation:

Both sides are vulnerable: East-West have 60 part-score; East deals and bids one heart.

	♠ A Q 6 5 4 ♥ 5 4 3 2 ♦ K 8 ♣ 6 4	
♠ 9 8 3 ♥ 7 ♦ Q J 10 9 2 ♣ K 9 8 5	N W E S	♠ J ♥ A Q J 10 9 6 ♦ 7 4 ♣ A J 7 3
	♠ K 10 7 2 ♥ K 8 ♦ A 6 5 3 ♣ Q 10 2	

But for East-West's part-score, South should not bid over East's one-heart bid, since he has not quite the values for a sound take-out double. The situation, however, is desperate and it requires very little imagination on his part to foresee that, should he supinely pass, it will get worse instead of better. On a 60 score, West must consider the heart bid as a virtual force; surely he will scrape up, at the very least, a no-trump response. What then will be North's dilemma, even if he holds a fair hand? He cannot be expected to bid at the two, possibly the three level without knowing that South has good support for whatever suit he chooses. If South passes over the heart bid, West will bid one no-trump and poor North, rather than risk an enormous penalty, will have to pass.

To forestall such an outcome, South must take action, and obviously this action must take the form of a take-out double. Now whether or not West bids, North can enter the bidding with a light heart, secure in the knowledge that,

even if South's double is shaded, no catastrophe can result.

HORRENDOUS (BUT POPULAR) BIDDING

In discussing logical defence against part-scores, I cannot overlook a failing among average and lesser players that is as prevalent as it is costly. I refer to their lack of foresight in planning the bidding.

East, with a 60 part-score, bids one diamond; South holds ♠ 6 5 ♥ A Q J 8 6 2 ♦ 7 5 ♣ Q 6 3. He passes on the naïve 'theory', I suppose, that one diamond will not mean game. Possibly to his astonishment, West bids two or even three diamonds, which is passed around to him. Now, determined to save the game, he takes his life in hand by bidding two or three hearts!

BIDDING TO ONE'S OWN PART-SCORE

Now that we have covered the standard situations involved when the opponents are on score, we come to the equally touchy subject of bidding to one's own part-score.

CONCEALING STRENGTH

North, with a part-score of 60, opens the bidding with one club; East passes, and South holds:

♠ K 10 8 ♥ A J 9 ♦ Q J 4 2 ♣ Q 10 4

With such a hand he realizes that game its assured, but that a slam is remote. He also realizes that West, not yet heard from, may be anxious to defend. South's problem is to make it costly, *but possible*, for West to enter the bidding. South's hand is not so terrific that he can allow West to bid one heart or one spade (which West may do if South bids one diamond) nor does South wish to stifle West with a gag of two no-trump. Since he will be well content to double any two-bid, his proper response is an ambiguous one no-trump.

The corollary to this is, of course, that West must look askance at a bid of one no-trump from South in this situation!

CONCEALING WEAKNESS

It is a much more difficult matter to conceal weakness

than strength, when partner has opened on a part-score. Yet the greater the weakness, the more reason for its concealment. Suppose that North, on a 20 part-score, opens the bidding with one club. South holds

♠ 8 6 ♥ 7 ♦ Q J 10 6 2 ♣ K 7 5 4 2

Whether East overcalls the club bid or not, a two no-trump bid is made-to-order for South. South will of course run out of any bid North makes (such as three no-trump, three spades or three hearts) to four clubs. A direct pre-empt by South of four clubs would stimulate rather than discourage the opponents.

PRE-EMPTIVE BIDS—HONEST AND FAKE

Since the very first days of contract, many self-styled theorists have delivered rousing philippics against pre-emptive bidding.

Usually, I am not only tolerant of conflicting opinion—I try to profit by it! But I do not believe anyone who claims never, or seldom, to have been embarrassed, let alone obstructed, by adverse pre-emptive bids. I have been seriously embarrassed on innumerable occasions; what makes *them* sacred? I should be very grateful if these profound players were to tell me what to do if the opening bidder pre-empts with three spades and I, next hand and vulnerable, hold something like this:

♠ 6 5 ♥ A K 7 5 3 2 ♦ A J 6 ♣ Q 4

Perhaps they would simply give the pre-emptor a withering glance and bid four hearts in a loud, confident tone. If *I* bid four hearts, I'd do so shaking in my shoes.

PRE-EMPTIVE BIDS AFTER THE OPPONENTS HAVE BID

Generally speaking, it is futile to pre-empt after an opening bid by opponents. He has already laid the line of communication to his partner; the information transmitted, while possibly incomplete, is usually sufficient for carrying-on purposes.

There are, however, opportunities for pre-emptive *coups* when certain conditions prevail. With such bidding as

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♥	

East may hold a hand like

♠ A K J 10 8 5 3 ♥ — ♦ Q 8 4 ♣ Q 7 5

A pre-emptive spade bid at this point may be highly provocative to the opening bidder, who is apt to regard it as an effort to keep him quiet. He may have planned either a three-heart or a two no-trump rebid over North's heart raise; an interfering three-spade bid may spur him to four hearts. East's heart void indicates that such a bid may be eagerly welcomed by West, who may be 'loaded' with hearts. I have heard this *coup* vulgarly but succinctly described as 'dumping the opponents into partner's lap'.

TRAPPING

Before discussing the various methods most effective in trapping the opponents, I had better digress a moment to scotch an impression that many badly-informed players have concerning this type of strategy. I have been asked so often 'Is it ethical and sportsmanlike to "lay for" the opponents?' that I feel my reply must be recorded permanently.

It is entirely ethical and sportsmanlike to lay traps in Bridge, both in the bidding and in the play, *provided* such extraneous and illegal devices as bluff hesitations, meaningful voice inflections, emphatic playing of signal-cards and a host of other histrionic gestures contrary to the spirit of the game are not employed.

The player who, either by a pass on a big hand or a psychic bid on a poor one, succeeds in trapping his opponents, deserves full credit for his exploit; he has taken a serious risk, and won out!

Now let us consider the various methods of trapping.

TRAP PASS OVER OPPONENTS' BID

This is the most common type of trap. It is also the most abused. One does not pass an opponent's one-bid for a trap with a hand which justifies a sound bid or take-out double, unless he is playing against the type of player who 'always keeps the bidding open for partner'. But a trap pass of, say, an opponent's one-spade bid is good strategy holding a hand such as:

♠ Q 10 6 5 3 ♥ A Q ♦ K 6 5 ♣ A Q 2

If the bidding reaches two spades or one no-trump, a penalty double should be most profitable.

The trapper need fear only one thing: that the bidding will not be kept open. And even then, no great loss should result. If his partner has some strength, he will interject a bid largely on suspicion.

THE TRAPPER'S PARTNER

Let us put ourselves in the East position on the following bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	Pass	?

East holds ♠ 6 ♥ K 10 9 6 5 ♦ K 9 4 3 ♣ J 7 2

Not a very robust hand, to be sure, but it is just such hands that create problems. Shall we pass, satisfied that the opponents have stopped at one, or put in a bid to protect West if he is trapping?

These are the questions we must ask ourselves. First and foremost, what is the vulnerability condition?

It might be well to tabulate the vulnerability conditions under which trapping is and is not advisable:

Neither side vulnerable: trapping not usually wise.

Opening bidder vulnerable; trapper not vulnerable: ideal for trapping purposes.

Opening bidder not vulnerable; trapper vulnerable; very unwise to trap.

Both sides vulnerable; trapping may be wise.

When we, as East, have satisfied ourselves whether the correct vulnerability condition for trapping exists, we consider the distribution of our hand.

The singleton spade, with its implication of spade length in West's hand, must not escape notice. On a hand so weak, it is really the determining factor. Paradoxically to many players perhaps, the very lack of spade defence is the reason we should, with a good partner, keep the bidding alive. If our hand were like

♠ 6 4 3 2 ♥ K 10 9 6 5 ♦ Q 9 4 ♣ J

we should pass to the one-spade bid as fast as we can get

the word out—the four spades in our hand make it extremely unlikely that partner has made a trap-pass.

SHIFT-BID TRAPS

Most trapping tactics involve merely the use of that despised word 'pass'. Other trapping devices exist, notably the so-called shift-bid.

There are only a few situations in which shift-bids may prove valuable—*if properly timed against the proper adversaries*. Here is one:

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	2 ♣	

East, whose turn it is to bid, holds

♠ K Q J 10 8 6 ♥ K Q J 10 ♦ 7 5 ♣ 2

It is obvious that this hand should take eight tricks with spades as trump; it is very unlikely that the other two tricks necessary to a game contract will be found in partner's hand. The one hope of making a game is to be doubled at a two-spade contract. To trap such a double, East overcalls North's two-club take-out with a psychic bid of two diamonds. The no-trump bidder, South, is very apt to double, whereupon East runs out to two spades. If he is lucky enough to find one of the opponents in a doubling humour, this apparent 'rescue bid' may be doubled also.

BIDDING OVER A TAKE-OUT DOUBLE

The best opportunities for shift-bids occur after a take-out double. Since most bids (except redoubles) made directly over a double show weakness, it becomes comparatively safe to indulge in psychic or shift-bidding, provided, of course, that the bidder holds a good fit with partner's announced suit or an escape suit of his own.

Suppose South, not vulnerable, opens the bidding with one club and West, vulnerable, doubles for a take-out. North holds

♠ 8 6 2 ♥ 7 4 ♦ Q J 9 ♣ K 10 7 5 2

He is not only pitifully weak defensively, but in addition his club length is apt to kill some of South's tricks. Heroic measures are indicated. To pre-empt with four clubs is to

court a severe penalty—and it may not even shut the opponents out of their likely game.

The best chance is a one-spade or one-heart bid. If East, the take-out doubler's partner, is not very alert, or is a timid bidder, the stratagem may succeed; at least it can hardly lose.

A psychic bid of one or two no-trump is not good strategy; the former is not high enough to shut out a bid, and the latter is a little 'too raw' to be successful. Alert players should rarely be taken in by shift-bids.

It is unwise to get into a doubling 'stride'; experts may double four or five successive bids and cannily pass when a new suit is suddenly brought out. The cards themselves—not vague suspicions—must guide doubles.

BIDS TO MISPLACE CARDS

A psychic bid calculated to assure the opponents that the sure tricks and solid suits staring them in the face are not there at all—are simply mirages—has not a very good chance of succeeding. Even the weakest players trust their own eyesight.

The only rational reason for psychic bids of all descriptions is to lead the opponents to think that their Kings and Queens are apt to be trapped by superior honours or that their suits will fail to break.

A bluff bid that has any sense must be provided with an emergency landing field. To pick up such a hand as

♠ 6 3 2 ♥ 8 7 5 ♦ 10 7 4 3 ♣ J 5 2

and open with one no-trump on it, is to jump out of an aeroplane with an opened umbrella instead of a parachute; it *may* get you down safely, but the chances are a million to one against it.

If, however, against not-too-bright opponents, you pick up such a hand as

♠ 6 2 ♥ 8 5 ♦ K Q J 9 6 5 2 ♣ 7 3

an *overcall* of an opponent's bid with one no-trump may have a beautiful result.

DOUBLING ON PARTNER'S BEHALF

A situation that permits the exercise of the highest strategy is exemplified in the following hand:

♠ K
♥ 3 2
♦ J 9 8 3
♣ J 7 6 5 4 2

♠ A Q 9 6 3 2
♥ 4
♦ 7 4 2
♣ A 9 3

N
W E
S

♠ J 8 7 4
♥ Q 10 9 6
♦ A 6 5
♣ Q 10

♠ 10 5
♥ A K J 8 7 5
♦ K Q 10
♣ K 8

The bidding (neither side vulnerable):

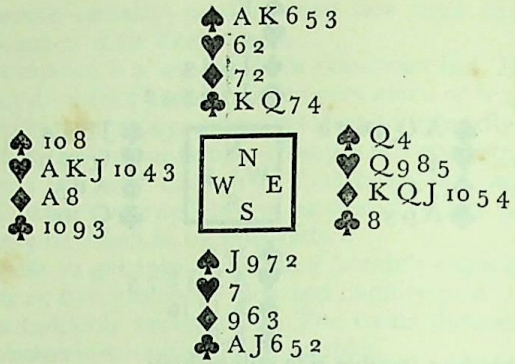
West (dealer)	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♠	3 ♥
Pass	Pass	3 ♠	4 ♥
Double!	Pass	Pass	Pass

West's double, which is certainly not justified by his holding is based on the following reasoning:

Despite the fact that East cannot have a big hand (witness his weak spade raise), even after South's vulnerable three-heart bid he showed he was not afraid of a heart game by again raising spades. He could not have great hopes of a game in spades, since West had made no rebid after being raised. Obviously, it would be inconsistent for East to bid up to four spades, considering his inability to give more than a minimum raise on the first round, and therefore he *must* be planning to double four hearts, if it should be bid. West makes the double himself so that South cannot place the heart honours.

SUPERIORITY OF SUITS

The existence of suit superiority in rank (as spades to hearts) sometimes calls for special treatment. In any hand where both sides can make the same number of tricks at their respective trump declarations, the side with the higher ranking suit obviously enjoys an enormous advantage. Stratagems that may, in many cases, counteract this advantage have already been described. At other times the best strategy is retreat, as in this hand:



The bidding (both sides vulnerable):

West (dealer)	North	East	South
1 ♥	1 ♠	2 ♥	2 ♠
3 ♥	3 ♠	?	

At this stage, East's discretion should temper his courage. True, he is almost sure that four hearts can be made (which it can, of course), but he can be equally sure that North-South, with their superior suit, will not allow it to play. And certainly he cannot count on defeating four spades, if it is bid.

His one hope must be that South will decide to drop the bidding at three spades. In actual fact, it is a close question for South to decide. If pushed by a four-heart bid, South will undoubtedly go to four spades as an offensive-defensive action. And with the favourable lay of cards, four spades is a lay-down.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE PERSONAL EQUATION

The sum of all technical knowledge cannot make a master Contract player. If it could, the greatest experts would be simply those players with the most retentive memories and instead of a magnificent scientific pastime, Contract would be merely a glorified spelling-bee.

The personal element in Contract is so pervasive that few intelligent bids or plays can be made without taking it into consideration. So true is this that a good bid or play may be reduced to a formula; thus:

$$\frac{\text{Bid or play}}{\text{Situation}} + \text{Partner's Psychology} + \text{Opponent's Psychology} = X$$

With correct valuation applied to every element, X will of course represent perfection.

Whether a player is considering such an apparently elementary point as making an opening bid on minimum values, or attempting one of the bidding stratagems described in the last chapter, his decision must be guided by his partner's probable reaction.

PLAYING PARTNER'S GAME

There is widespread misconception of the proper technique to offset great aggressiveness or great timidity in a partner. A standard explanation for the failure to bid the full strength of one's hand is 'but I didn't *dare* with so-and-so for a partner! We would have landed on the roof!'

The usual theory that with an aggressive partner one must be conservative and with a conservative partner one must be aggressive is completely fallacious. *The opposite is true*, paradoxical as it may seem. Let A, who is ridiculously optimistic, once see that you are 'holding back' with him, and his bidding, far from coming down to earth, will soar to high heaven! If you pass his opening bid, he will 'figure' that you were afraid to raise on a mere two Kings and a Queen; if you give him a single raise, he will assume you have about 2½ honour-tricks and good distribution.

Contrariwise, with B the chronic underbidder a few drastic overbids or over-raises on your part will send him scurrying to cover like a frightened chipmunk! And after that, nothing will convince him that he hasn't a wild man to contend with, and his timidity will become more and more acute until he automatically passes at every opportunity.

Since attempting to 'compensate' cannot succeed, what course *should* be followed with extremist partners? None but this: meet them on their own ground! With A, bid aggressively; let him see for himself that you bid your own value up to the hilt and that, consequently, it will be fatal for him to do it for you. Scare him to death!

With B, be conservative. Let your bids, and particularly your raises, be so sound that he gains complete confidence; then he is apt to blossom like a shy flower.

PARTNER'S BRIDGE MENTALITY

So far we have discussed only partner's *disposition* with reference to his optimism or conservatism. Now we come to his *Bridge mentality*.

With a stolid, unimaginative partner, there is no more sense in attempting a stratagem that requires co-operation than there would be in reading Einstein to a child. With him, the highest strategy is cut-and-dried, one hundred per cent conventional Bridge.

With such a partner, the technique of trap bidding (as described on page 379) must be modified by the foreknowledge that he cannot be depended upon for 'protection'. The forcing pass (Chapter XXXIII) must be discarded entirely—there is too terrible a danger that when the bidding comes around to him, he will simply pass. Far better to make a decision yourself, even though the responsibility is logically his. Bluff no-trump bids (see page 382) are far too dangerous with a partner who will never 'let you off the hook'—who will keep bidding his own suit till kingdom come.

PSYCHOLOGY OF DOUBLES

The fields of take-out and penalty doubles require the most delicate readjustment according to partner's Bridge intelligence. Take, for example, a situation such as this:

Both sides vulnerable, East deals and bids one club. You hold

♠ A K 6 2 ♥ A K 6 2 ♦ K 5 2 ♣ 4 3

You naturally double for a take-out. West passes and your partner responds with one spade. East passes and now it is up to you again. What should you bid?

The proper bid ranges from two to four spades, depending on the type of partner you have. With an expert, two spades is strong enough to find out from him whether or not he had a little bit better than a forced response.

With an average player, three spades is the best bid. He will require that much encouragement to bid again if he holds such a hand as

♠ J 8 5 4 3 ♥ Q 7 5 ♦ Q J 6 ♣ 8 5

With a weak player, your best gamble is to jump (quite unsoundly) to four. Should he hold the hand just described, or even slightly better, he would pass to even a jump raise—on the theory that 'he hadn't a trick'.

The subject of take-out doubles reveals amazing paradoxes. A player who could not be bribed into opening such a hand as

♠ A K 10 4 3 ♥ K 10 6 2 ♦ J 7 5 ♣ 6

will smugly make a take-out double of an opponent's spade bid on

♠ 5 ♥ Q 10 7 2 ♦ K 7 5 2 ♣ K 10 8 4

He will, if criticized, point righteously to his 'excellent *support* for any other suit'.

On the other hand, if you make a take-out double, and he holds

♠ K 10 9 8 6 2 ♥ Q 10 9 5 4 ♦ 5 ♣ 2

he will respond with one spade, and then later expostulate: 'Why, I had only one King and one Queen in my hand!'

These are idiosyncrasies that only experience can discover; the point is that *all* of partner's 'theories' must be carefully noted and filed away for future reference.

PARTNER'S MORALE

In discussing partner's morale I can do no better than to quote from my first published book on Contract, the *Blue Book*:

The question of morale is automatically solved for those who realize that partnership is simply a sporting proposition; we are drawn together for better or for worse, and therefore, like true pals, should stand by each other cheerfully and courageously.

The practical attitude toward all partners should be that of a philosophical, sincere and sympathetic friend. Partner must never be allowed to feel that his loss is taken too hard by you. During bidding and play, partner, however weak, must feel that you sincerely respect his intelligence and efforts. Unless he is the veriest beginner, his bids must not be taken away from him on the silly ground that he would lose tricks in the play. He should be complimented if successful, and if he makes a blunder extenuating circumstances should be provided for him as an escape.

Partnership morale will always be maintained at a very high level if the following rule is obeyed to the letter: 'Never reproach your partner if there be the slightest thing for which you can reproach yourself.' Most disasters can be avoided by a good player if he takes care to foresee partner's possible mistakes.

This does not mean that partner should be unnecessarily flattered. Russians say very appropriately, 'Praise the goat and next time she will refuse her milk.' It is true that there are certain types of partners who can be brought out of their depressing fits only by a sharp word.

But recriminations, *even though one is quite right*, are like pouring water on flaming oil, and serious mistakes almost invariably follow.

OPPONENTS' PSYCHOLOGY

The most essential point to determine in a given hand is whether it is more important to tell partner the whole truth, necessarily letting the opponents 'listen-in', or to mislead the opponents at the cost of misleading partner. The hand itself, and the situation, are the deciding factors.

Take such a simple case as this:

With both sides vulnerable and North-South having a part-score of 20, North deals and passes; East passes and South holds:

♠ K J 9 ♥ K Q 10 ♦ A K Q 10 9 ♣ K Q

Here is a situation 'made to order'! After partner's pass, a slam is remote, requiring an absolute minimum of two Aces in his hand, and therefore need not be given serious consideration. A much more profitable *coup* is possible namely an apparently pre-emptive bid of four diamonds! South need not worry that he is misinforming partner—he does not require North's co-operation on this hand. If West holds a fair hand (which the passes by North and East make likely) and is persuaded by the state of the score and South's 'pre-emptive' bid to enter the bidding, he will probably be carried out on a stretcher!

A hand played by Mrs. Culbertson in the final round of an important tournament a few years ago portrays the fine art of using the simple truth as a double-cross:

	♠ A Q 6 5 2 ♥ 7 4 ♦ 9 6 ♣ A K Q 8	
♠ 8 ♥ A J 8 5 2 ♦ Q 10 7 4 3 ♣ 9 5	N W E S	♠ K 10 9 7 4 ♥ 10 9 3 ♦ J 5 ♣ 10 6 3
	♠ J 3 ♥ K Q 6 ♦ A K 8 2 ♣ J 7 4 2	

Mrs. Culbertson

North	East	South	West
1 ♠	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♣	Pass	3 ♦	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

No sooner was the final pass out of East's mouth than he fired a *diamond* as the opening lead! Mrs. Culbertson's three-diamond bid was the key-bid of the hand. Very shrewdly, she figured that East would regard the bid as an effort to stop a diamond lead, and she counted on his 'not allowing himself to be fooled!'

Against that type of player, the *truth* was the most subtle double-cross!

CHANGE OF PACE

A truly great player is one about whom half of his partners swear that he is conservative, while the other half maintain that he is aggressive. He is in fact neither conservative nor aggressive, but is bold or cautious according to the bidding situations and partner's psychology.

Contract is a vast armoury, in which weapons for every purpose, aggressive and defensive, are stocked. The password for admittance is knowledge; the selection of the right weapon requires imagination and experience; the actual use of it demands coolness and courage under fire!

CHAPTER XXXVII

MODERN THEORY OF DISTRIBUTION

Few things are more complex than a trick. The true nature and *behaviour* of a trick is still a mystery even to most experts. Behind the apparent obviousness of a trick there lies a structure so intricately subtle, so ingeniously paradoxical and withal so simple, that one can see why more than 3000 years were required for the evolution of cards and of the trick that springs from them.

STRUCTURE OF A DECK OF CARDS

The striking characteristics of honour and length tricks have their roots in the inherent structure of a deck of cards. Each of the four original 13-card suits in a pack is built in two directions—Rank and Length.

Each suit is organized from two elements or principles.

1. According to the principle of *Rank* (strength), each card is either higher or lower in rank than another card of the same suit: so that a card wins a trick simply because it is the highest (strongest) of the suit led.

From this source are derived all the ranking tricks.

Example:

♠ 9 8 6

♠ A K Q 2 — N / W E / S — ♠ 7 4 3

♠ J 10 5

West wins the first three top tricks.

2. According to the principle of *Length* (mass) the same 13-card suit when dealt to partner and opponents breaks up into smaller suits of unequal length. All low card tricks—long-suit tricks and ruffers—arise from *differences* in length.

In the foregoing example, West's ♠ 2—the length trick,

The long-suit tricks result from one extreme of a suit (greatest length) and the short tricks or ruffers are derived from the opposite extreme (shortest length):

(*a*) A long suit is established because the greater length of the suit permits the player to clear the opposing cards of the suit and yet have one or more *long* cards left. By eliminating the master cards, they thus become 'promoted' to the highest rank.

Example:

♥ A K Q

♥ 7 6 5 4 3 2 — N / W E / S — ♥ J 10 9

Three potential tricks survive

♥ 8

An interesting case of survival, not of the fittest but of the longest.

(*b*) Ruffing tricks become possible because the very shortness of the suit (a singleton or a doubleton) permits the player to establish, usually in the dummy, a void in that suit and thus gain an extra trick or tricks by ruffing the losers of one hand with the otherwise worthless trumps of the other. (See Ruffing Tricks, Chapter XXXIX.)

These ruffers are a remarkable application, in the world of cards, of the principle of utilization of waste products so beloved by the modern manufacturer. The amazing part is that the chemistry of the ruffers is highly paradoxical since it is based on the very absence of the 'product'—a void suit.

The world of cards has solved the age-long social problem of the rugged individual *v.* the collective by a happy combination of the aristocratic and democratic principles, rendering equal homage to the factor of quality and to the factor of quantity. A 13-card suit is a rigid hierarchy where every card, excepting the deuce and the Ace, is a master to all those below in rank but a lackey to the ones above it. This creates one source of trick values based on the *quality* or strength of the individual card. The low cards, insignificant as individuals, wield a tremendous power through the sheer

weight of anonymous numbers. This results in the second source or trick-taking value based on the *quantity* or *number* of the cards of the same suit. They are group units or 'unions' as opposed to the individual.

Furthermore, each individual card of the original 13-card suit plays a double role: it may make a trick by virtue of its individual strength (rank), and at the same time it is a humble unit of a suit, adding to its length. With ♠ A 6 5 3 2 the Ace is both a general and a common soldier; it wins a trick because of its rank; it is also one of the five spade units, thus contributing towards length tricks.[1] The ranking value of nines or lower cards is increasingly remote since they must fall on the first three or four leads of the higher ranking cards. It will be seen that however great the power of honour cards may be, the issue is generally decided by the 'reserve battalion' of low cards in long and short suits. The world is full of quick-trick bidders who are so hypnotized by the very obviousness of the fat honours in the hand that the full hidden significance of the low cards escapes them. An obscure four-card suit headed by a nine is to be noted with respect, for it may be that extra trick on the last weary stretch toward the game.

THE STRUCTURE OF A SUIT

The hand will usually consist of four suits and by a *hand-pattern* is meant the various lengths that the four (or fewer) suits assume in order to make up the 13 cards of a hand. There is as much difference between a hand-pattern ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣ 4 - 3 - 3 - 3 which is barren in both length and ruffing values and a rich pattern ♠ ♥ ♦ ♣ 4 - 4 - 4 - 1 as between the Mojave Desert and the lush vegetation of the Imperial Valley.

A suit is the working unit of a hand and the total trick-taking power is made up of the trick values of its component suits.

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[1] Beside its rank and length value the Ace has a *time value* as a stopper and quick entry card.

A suit can consist of *one* or more cards. Four-card or greater lengths are called long suits because, with favourable distribution, they can establish at least one long card.

Three or fewer cards of the same suit are called short suits. The ruffing value of a three-card short suit is exceedingly remote and generally the term is restricted to doubletons and singletons. A void suit, when dealt ready-made, is by itself an ideal 'short suit', even though such remains of the suit are no greater than the grin of a Cheshire cat.

The low cards in long and short suits *have their own trick-taking power* independently from ranking cards.

Example:

♥ A K 2

♥ 7 6 5 4 3 Establishes two long cards

N W E S

♥ 9 8

♥ Q J 10

Similarly, doubletons and singletons possess their own intrinsic value and the presence of a top card merely saves a *tempo* and thus accelerates the pace in establishing a ruff. So that at a trump bid a Solo Ace in the dummy has one value as an Ace and still another value as a singleton.

As a rule, the long suit is a mixture of length and honour values. Length needs the steel and cement of honours without which it is an anarchical mob; while honours without length are like Swiss admirals.

DISTRIBUTIONAL VALUES

The bidding value of an honour will depend upon its individual strength as well as upon the *position* of the higher ranking honour in opponent's hand. The governing principle of all low cards is distribution.

The word *distribution* is limited to variations of length and is used in two senses:

The distribution of the 13 cards of a suit in the four hands is called Suit Distribution.

The distribution of the four suits in a hand of 13 cards is called Hand Distribution.

Mathematically, the same percentage of frequency applies to suit or hand distributions. (See page 435, Table of Frequencies.) In practice they deal with two entirely different problems:

(*a*) Suit-distribution determines the available supply of long-card tricks in a suit.

(*b*) Hand distribution determines the available supply of short suits (ruffing tricks) in a hand.

Both are length values and both are dependent on distribution and for this reason are called *distributional values*.

SUIT DISTRIBUTION AND LONG CARDS

In any long suit the number of establishable low cards is governed by the distribution of the remaining cards of the same suit (remainders) in partner's and opponents' hands. It is a case of the tail wagging the body.

Example:

1. A K Q J
2. A K Q
3. A K

7 6 5 4 3 2

	N	
W		E
	S	

1. 8
2. 8
3. 10 9 8

1. 10 9
2. J 10 9
3. Q J

West's six-card length can establish two, three or four long cards depending on the distribution of the remainders. The presence or absence in the long suit of ranking cards does not affect the *number* of establishable long cards. In the foregoing example if we take away the Ace from North and give it to West in exchange for a low card the number of long cards will be unaffected and the suit will simply be enriched by one extra honour-trick.

The mechanics of suit distribution is based on the fact that ranking cards require low card *guards* in order to avoid being dropped simultaneously, thus knocking each other

out; or, as the gallant French say, kissing each other. For instance, with:

♠ 7 5 3 2

♠ K Q — N / W E / S — ♠ J 10

♠ A 9 8 6 4

the four outstanding top honours are positively suffocated for the lack of guards. They are crowded upon each other and in the play will take but one trick, so great is their mutual slaughter. But move a trey and deuce from North's into West's hand, and the picture is radically changed. Now South can establish but one long card instead of three (a 200 per cent difference!), each lowly guard being worth as much as an Ace.[1] It follows that the longer the *combined* length of the suit in partnership hands, the fewer the guards available for opponents' ranking cards, and hence the more establishable tricks to the suit.

In bidding it is of vital importance to select a trump suit the combined length of which offers a safely playable majority. The combined length of eight cards with two or three fair honours is considered a playable majority of trumps. It does not matter much whether the eight-card length is distributed between partners 4-4 or 5-3 or 6-2. The extra long tricks in five- or six-card lengths are generally compensated by the extra ruffers and greater elasticity of play with 4-4 division. A seven-card combined length is an unstable majority and is safe, as a rule, only when the suit is strongly cemented with honours or with outside strength. With 4-3 or 5-2 the chances are strongly against the even break of the remaining six cards and consequently, the declarer must be prepared to play against four trumps—never a pleasant experience. The fear of an unsound trump suit is a nightmare to any good player. Bitter experience has taught him

[1] With solid suits there is no higher ranking card outstanding to guard against and, consequently, the distribution of the remaining cards is of no importance, except when the suit is trump and is in danger of being forced.

that a weak trump suit at a high contract is one of the major causes of Bridge disasters, for if the trump fortress collapses the hands also collapse.

In order to discover and select the best trump bid a number of bidding methods were developed to show suit distributions in partnership hands.

HAND DISTRIBUTION

The length of the trump suit and the shortness of the ruffable side suit—the pattern or hand distribution—determines the number of available ruffers in the supporting hand. (See Chapter XXXIX.) In other words, the more trumps and the shorter the suit the more ruffers.

In support of partner's spade bid,

♠ Q 4 2 ♥ 5 3 ♦ 7 6 3 2 ♣ K J 10 9

the doubleton heart is a problematical ruffer considering that the first thing opponents will do is to lead trumps. (See Chapter IV, Distributional Count.) But add one more trump and remove a diamond and the doubleton is practically certain to make a ruffer. Again, a singleton heart with three trumps will average to produce at least one ruffer, but with four trumps it will produce at least two ruffers.

The decrease or increase in the number of ruffers and other length tricks according to the type of the hand pattern dealt is extraordinary. There is a far greater difference between a 4-3-3-3 and a 4-4-4-1 than between a man and a monkey.

THE DIFFERENT HAND PATTERNS

All hand patterns that contain a singleton also contain, either three four-card lengths or at least one five-card and one four-card length or a six-card or longer suit. For instance, 5-4-3-1, 6-4-2-1, 4-4-4-1 are eminently suited to trump bids, for in addition to containing promise of a couple of ruffers, and a desirable four-trump support, they also have a side length value which, under powerful trump protection, is more nearly certain of timely establishment than at no-trump.

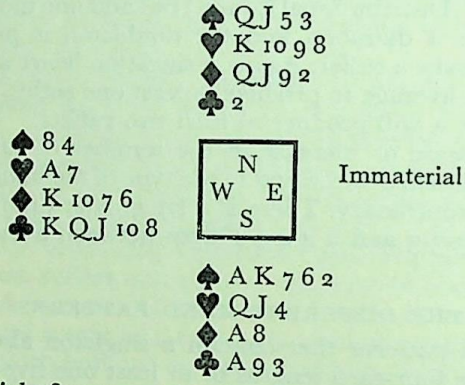
The balanced type of patterns such as 5-3-3-2, 4-4-3-2, 4-3-3-3 or 6-3-2-2 are not only deficient in ruffing values

but in side suit lengths as well. In practical bidding these differences of hand patterns are of tremendous importance when choosing between trump and no-trump as a final bid. For it is the presence or absence of ruffers and added lengths that in most cases will determine whether it is cheaper to play for nine tricks at no-trump or ten tricks at a major or even eleven tricks at a minor.

TRICK VALUES *v.* SCORING VALUES

In many cases the player has enough stoppers for no-trump and at the same time a fairly good trump suit. Shall he choose no-trump or trump for his final game bid?

For instance, in the following hand the added stopping power of trumps in declarer's hand gains so much time that 12 tricks are made with spades as trumps and only 8 tricks could be made at no-trump. All suits are stopped and the bid is three no-trump. West leads the club King.



Nine tricks for game at no-trump cannot be made because West can establish four club tricks and has an entry in either the Ace of hearts or King of diamonds *before* North can establish his ninth trick in hearts, or in diamonds. If North had an extra stopper in clubs, say ♣ A Q 9, then he would have made at no-trump 12 tricks instead of 8. The trump suit offers these extra stoppers and, as a result, with spades trumps North is able to hold in check the attacking club suit, while on the other front he can concentrate on the

mobilization of his heart suit, and with precious time thus gained produce 12 tricks for the combined hands.

The second distinction between the structure of trump and no-trump plays is even more important. Trumps are not only additional super-stoppers and entries but in trump hands *short suits can be utilized* (usually in the dummy) *to produce ruffers which are extra tricks not available at no-trumps*. No-trump victories are won with only two kinds of tricks—honours and long suits; in trump plays there appears a third kind of trick—ruffers.

The requirement of 9 tricks for game at no-trump as against the 10 or 11 for game in suit bids is mainly an awkward attempt to counterbalance the excess of ruffing-tricks available at trump bids.[1]

The following hands have all suits stopped.

♠ A K 10 6 3 ♥ 6 ♦ A 7 5 4 ♣ A 6 3	N W E S	♠ Q J 9 8 ♥ A 9 5 3 ♦ 8 ♣ 8 7 5 2

At no-trump they will produce but 8 tricks, but at spades the same 8 tricks are available *plus* three ruffs of losing diamonds in the dummy, or 11 tricks in all.

WHEN NO-TRUMP IS CHEAPER

It is now possible to approach understandingly the all-important problem of choosing the final game bid between

[1] The scoring distinction between no-trump and trump bids is logically derived from their different structure. In fact it would be nearer to the mark to award a game bonus for two-no-trump bids as against four in trump bids. The distinction made between major- and minor-suit bids, however, is purely arbitrary and inconsistent with the structure of bids. Intrinsically it is just as difficult to make four clubs as four spades and there is no reason whatsoever why a minor-suit bid, which is already handicapped by a precedence in rank given to majors, should be practically crippled. The writer long ago expressed a wish and hope that some day all suits would be equalized in scoring. This will shorten the rubbers, make the game more logical (and therefore more beautiful) and at the same time do away with the innumerable artificial and futile club and diamond conventions.

no-trump and trump. The foregoing advantages of trump bids are limited to hand-distributions containing added lengths or ruffers or both. There are other hand patterns where the advantage of the trump suit is nullified because no added lengths or ruffers are available. For instance, hand pattern 5-3-3-2 has only one long suit: its advantage as trump falls off since no second four-card or longer suit is available for which the trump may be an added protection.

But if declarer holds a 5-4-3-1 hand pattern the *tendency* would be towards selection of the five-card trump suit as a final bid rather than no-trump. It is true that the singleton brings in no extra tricks, but the better chances of timely establishment of the four-card length under trump protection counterbalances the extra trick required for game.[1]

For instance:

Declarer	Dummy
♠ A K 10 6 3	♠ Q J 7
♥ 8 4 2	♥ A 7 6 5
♦ A 5 3	♦ 9 6 2
♣ K 7	♣ A 8 3

the combined hands will produce nine tricks game, at no-trump; at a bid of four spades the extra tenth trick required to score game cannot be produced even with a jimmy. The dearth of length values or ruffers with these types of hand-distribution render the cheaper no-trump game bid more advantageous.

As a general principle and assuming other factors (stoppers, etc.) to be equal, *it is the hand distribution that regulates the choice between the final no-trump and trump bids.*

If the hand pattern is balanced and contains no added

[1] The near-beginners persisted stubbornly for many years in ascribing a greater value to a 5-4-3-1 than 5-3-3-2 despite the almost unanimous assertion of Bridge authorities that a singleton in declarer's hand was 'a liability rather than an asset' and that, therefore, there was no difference between the two patterns. The near beginners were right although they did not realize that the greater value of the 5-4-3-1 over the 5-3-3-2 pattern lies not in the singleton as an extra trick, but in the *time value* of the extra four-card length under trump protection.

trump values that justify the extra one or two tricks required for a game at suit bids, then no-trump is decidedly cheaper; if, however, the player holding an unbalanced pattern gives up the advantage of several tricks in order to play at no-trump, then the no-trump bid is decidedly more expensive. Too many players, blinded by the *scoring* value of no-trump games, lose sight of the far greater *playing* value of trump bids. It is equally true that another group of players seeking the greater safety of trump bids are apt to hide too much behind the skirts of a trump suit. In considering the hand patterns for the final choice, a distinction must be made between the declarer's hand pattern and that of the supporting hand.

DECLARER'S HAND PATTERNS

1. *Two-suited hand distributions will average to produce at least one more trick at the best trump bid than at no-trump.*

It follows that with hand patterns such as 5-4-3-1, 4-4-4-1, 6-4-2-1 and 5-5-2-1, the final say is for a trump bid if it is a major and has adequate trump support; if it is a minor the hand must be proportionately stronger or more freakish since 11 tricks are required for game as against 9 at no-trump.[1] The hand pattern 5-4-2-2 is on the borderline between 'trump' and 'no-trump' types of distribution. It has a second suit length, but with its two doubletons it is wide open, frequently enabling opponents to pick up an extra trick. Personally, however, I still favour a final trump bid.

2. *Hand patterns containing only one long suit, or two four-card suits, will not average to produce one more trick at a suit bid as against no-trump.*

It follows that the hand patterns such as 4-3-3-3, 5-3-3-2 and 4-4-3-2 should be preferred for game at no-trump. They are typical no-trump distributions, except possibly the

[1] The player should not fall into the fallacy of reasoning that the trump bid is better with unbalanced patterns because the hand contains a singleton and is therefore 'dangerous' for no-trump. From the standpoint of stoppers at no-trump a singleton is to be preferred to a doubleton or even a three-card suit because the shorter the suit the greater is the chance of finding the suit stopped in partner's hand.

4-4-3-2 when one of the four-card suits is partner's trump suit.

Distributions 6-3-2-2 and 6-3-3-1 are also no-trump distributions in declarer's hand, certainly as far as choice between no-trump and minor suits is concerned. In the case of a six-card major suit the question is a bit delicate although I still prefer the final choice of a no-trump.[1]

HAND PATTERNS IN SUPPORTING HAND

The type of hand pattern in the supporting hand, the dummy-to-be, is of far greater importance than in the declarer's hand. Here, a singleton, a void, or even a doubleton develops into ruffers, extra tricks not available in the declarer's hand.[2] It is the presence or absence of ruffers that is the principal lever regulating the final choice of bids.

THE VALUE OF UNBALANCED PATTERNS IN DUMMY

When the distribution of the responding hand is unbalanced (contains a singleton or void), the hand is worth from one to four tricks more at a favourable trump bid than at no-trump.

The same principle applies to very unbalanced distributions (freaks) or to situations where the combined hands are unbalanced, but in a more accentuated manner.

When the distribution of the responding hand is:

4-3-3-3 it has no extra value at a trump bid;

4-4-3-2 it has from ½ to 1½ tricks extra value at a trump bid, depending on whether it contains three or four trumps;

5-3-3-2
6-3-2-2 } it has about ½ trick extra value at a trump bid.

At times it is possible to infer from the bidding whether partner's distribution is balanced or unbalanced.

If the distribution of one hand is balanced, but the distribution of the other hand is unbalanced, the combined hands will still play to

[1] It must be remembered that these distributional principles apply only to the problem of the *final* choice of no-trump and trump bid. The question of the choice between the *opening* no-trump and trump bid is discussed in Chapter V.

[2] There is one exception in the case of declarer's hand. See pages 476 and 480 on Reverse Dummy Play.

better advantage (from one to two tricks better) at a favourable trump bid.

♠ A 10 5 3 2 ♥ K J 8 5 ♦ 6 ♣ 9 8 2	N W E S	♠ K 8 6 ♥ Q 10 4 3 ♦ A J 7 ♣ A K 3

At no-trump these hands will produce only nine tricks *even if East can win two tricks in diamonds*; and if the opponents can establish their diamond suit while they still hold the Ace of hearts, East-West cannot make game at no-trump.

With hearts as trumps, West's small hearts will ruff East's two losing diamonds, while East with his four hearts can probably draw the opponents' trumps; a spade trick will be lost, but then East can discard his losing club on one of West's spades. The total will be eleven tricks, with no danger that a long diamond suit will be run by the opponents.

EFFECT OF HAND-PATTERNS ON SLAMS AND PENALTY DOUBLES

Probably the most remarkable application of the theory of hand patterns is to slam bidding:

At slam bids the balanced patterns are worth from one to three tricks less than the unbalanced.

This is especially true with 4-3-3-3 and 5-3-3-2 hand patterns, which require extra reinforcement of honours and fillers. With 4-3-3-3 distribution the hand loses at least 1½ winners—one for the absence of a ruffer and ½ for the absence of a second suit length. If both hands are distributed 4-3-3-3 even a small slam is practically impossible.

It follows that utmost caution must be exercised when holding balanced patterns, not only for slam bids but for game bids as well. These patterns are best utilized for *penalty doubles* where their value not only is not decreased but actually increased due to the fact that second- and even third-round leads of defensive honour-tricks will be realized more frequently.

HAND PATTERNS AND OVERBIDDING

The Culbertson theory of hand patterns not only exercises a profound influence on the choice between trump and no-

trump contracts and penalty doubles, but will help to regulate the tactics of sacrifice overbidding. As a rule, it is very dangerous to attempt overbidding with *balanced* hand patterns. The loss is almost always heavier than expected. Overbidding with *unbalanced* patterns will usually lose *less* than expected provided the trump suit is carefully chosen.

So far I have analysed the suit and hand distributions from the standpoint of increase and decrease of tricks according to the type of hand pattern. I will now approach the patterns from an entirely different direction and will attempt to show how to make use of one's own hand pattern as a clue that helps to unravel (even before a bid is made) the mystery of the other suit and hand distributions of each deal.

THE LAW OF SYMMETRY[1]

There is far more to skill in Contract Bridge than knowledge of mathematical formulæ. Expert play does not consist primarily in applying the abstract probabilities but in substituting for them whenever possible the far more precise inferences derived from the bidding, the leads, and the plays. The Bridge player who depends on mathematics alone to determine during bidding and play the division of suits is leaning on a broken reed.

It is well, for instance, to know the mathematical chances for a certain type of finesse; it is much better to know how to avoid it altogether by some skilful end-play that involves no risk whatsoever.

THE FACTOR X IN CARD PROBABILITIES

To say that mathematics is only a small part of Bridge is not to impugn the validity of mathematical law, but the laws of simple probabilities must be modified and corrected when applied to cards. In calculating the probabilities of various hand and suit distributions the mathematicians presuppose an abstract perfect shuffle which is non-existent in

[1] Lack of space prevents fuller exposition of the Law of Symmetry. This chapter has been reduced from the *Red Book on Play*, which remains as the author's principal work on the modern theory of cards and the most complete exposition of play thus far published.

practice. This fact renders many of the current mathematical tables which are sacred to so many experts, if not worthless, at best of problematical value.

The conditions governing simple probabilities in Bridge or Poker are somewhat similar to those governing the fall of loaded dice. A deck of cards is similarly loaded by the artificial selection of longest suits for trump bids, of smallest cards for losing tricks, and of biggest cards for the winners. Suppose that pure chance has dealt to a player

♠ A K Q 8 7 5 4 ♥ — ♦ A K Q 3 ♣ 5 2

If the cards are not at all shuffled the next deal will be either extraordinarily 'normal' or once more freakish. It will hardly be average and it will certainly not be due this time to pure chance. At a contract of six spades the player leads out seven rounds of spades. The first twenty-eight cards therefore form an artificial pattern, the characteristic feature of which is the abnormal condition that seven times in succession the first card of the trick is a spade. If the dummy holds four strong clubs, one of the opponents will cling to the bitter end with his four clubs, so in the last four tricks there will be at least eight clubs bunched together, and thus the artificiality of the pattern will be enhanced, unless the cards are shuffled to the point of wearing off their spots. Speaking scientifically, every deck of cards after a few hours selective playing becomes, in the parlance of card sharps, 'a cold deck'. It is innocently stacked by the players themselves.[1]

At times both the blue and red decks 'fall into the stride' of freaks and during an entire afternoon or evening practically every deal is freakish. Freaks have their own laws of rhythm, and with an abnormal hand, abnormality is the rule. 'Normal' distributions, such as 5-3-3-2, become as rare as a sane patient in an insane asylum, and a freak is as

[1] Two or three master card players in the world have penetrated at least subconsciously to the bottom of cards. They not only remember the cards played in the present deal, but store in their minds the sequence of events in the preceding deal. Then, projecting the lay of cards of the preceding deal into the present deal, they attempt to pick up the broken bits and fragments that remained apparently intact after the shuffle and apply that knowledge to the wizardry of play.

common as a leper in a colony of lepers. The first freak is formed either by chance or by a curious process where a slightly unusual distribution in the course of successive deals grows more and more unusual; by a process similar to the distribution of wealth, the long suit grows longer, and the short suits shorter.

In a similar way a deck of cards can grow more and more prosaic and flat, so that not a single freak is dealt and there is nothing but a series of 4-4-3-2's and 5-3-3-2's. With hands of balanced type of distribution it becomes a brutal question of Aces and Kings and the advantage of a superior player is tremendously reduced.

The factor X—the artificially formed patterns and the imperfect shuffle—must be seriously reckoned with in calculations, and forms the basis of the Law of Symmetry.

It is no exaggeration to state that most of the mathematical calculations made in the last two hundred years for Whist and Bridge have been to a large extent incorrect, because the conclusions were based on the erroneous assumption that the events they calculated were equal. Therefore these calculations are of value only in dealing with such simple questions as whether, with eleven cards, headed by Ace and Queen, to finesse or to play for a drop. And even here, as we shall see in the revolutionary theory of the Law of Symmetry, a line of play based on other factors which are diametrically opposite to the simple mathematical probabilities will often prove to be more accurate.

Take, for instance, that ever-recurring miracle, which for so many years has been the chief topic of newspaper correspondents on Bridge—the hand containing thirteen cards of the same suit.[1] In spite of sworn affidavits and numerous witnesses, most Bridge authorities and mathematicians refuse to believe in the frequent repetitions of such an extraordinary event, for the law of probabilities has proclaimed that the chance of being dealt such a hand is one in 158,000,000,000. This figure has stood unimpeached for more than two hundred years. And yet, it is entirely errone-

[1] In order to test further the frequency of this event the author offers £1 for every hand containing 13 cards of the same suit. See the last page of this book.

ous—not in calculation but in assumption. It has never occurred to anyone that most of the single-suited hand stories are probably quite true and that it is the mathematicians who are wrong. They applied correct calculations to conditions which do not exist in practice. Manufacturers of playing cards arrange them in suits of thirteen cards each. That alone is sufficient to increase tremendously the probability of dealing a thirteen-card suit. Any player who will take the trouble to shuffle a new deck in such a manner that each card alternates with the other will find that after a few such shuffles he creates a pattern which results, no matter how the cards are cut, in each player's receiving thirteen cards of a suit.

In spite of all I have said, it would be a grievous error to conclude that the theory of simple probabilities is not applicable to Bridge. Far from it. What is needed in the modern theory of Bridge is not the elimination of the simple mathematical chances but their correction and adaptation in view of the new factor X.

THE THEORY OF THE LAW OF SYMMETRY

The Law of Symmetry is not a law at all in the sense of a physical law. It is rather a loose collection of trends and tendencies which are implicit in the artificial formation of a deck of cards. As an auxiliary to the laws of probabilities it attempts in a quick and practical manner to correct roughly the errors in the application of simple probabilities caused by the artificial suit formations of the play.

The Law of Symmetry can therefore be defined as a method of judging the types (balanced and unbalanced) of suit and hand patterns in the remaining three hands or, if two hands are seen, in the two unknown hands.

There are three ways of determining the distribution of the unknown hands. First and most important, by means of card reading. Second, by means of percentages. Third, by means of the Law of Symmetry. The last method, though still imperfect, is the most fascinating of the three, for here a player attempts to penetrate the unknown hands by using only his own hand as a guide.

The Law of Symmetry is based upon the fact that there is

a definite order in the artificial formation of suits during the play and that the shuffle seldom does its job completely. The type of a player's own hand is a symptom which will help the player to diagnose the distribution of the remaining thirty-nine cards of the deal. It furnishes the thread that will guide the observant player through the mysteries of the unknown distributions.

Thus, if you hold a 4-4-4-1 distribution you will consider it a very morbid symptom indicative of monstrous, cancer-like suit growths around the table. To start with, there must be somewhere a long suit to balance your singleton. If it is a five-card length, it means that someone else will have four or five of the same suit, at any rate something unbalanced. Similarly, the remaining suits must, so to speak, entwine themselves around your 4-4-4-1 hand pattern. And as they do so they will naturally be packed so as to fit in more easily. Thus, if your hand is lopsided or cross-eyed, then the entire deck is very probably lopsided or cross-eyed. The fruit does not fall far from its tree.

When, however, you hold a hand pattern belonging to the respectable but rather bourgeois family of balanced patterns, say the prosaic 5-3-3-2, this pattern symptom is nothing that is really alarming. At least one of the unknown hands, and at least one of the suits, will also be balanced, and probably other hands and suits as well.

The cards have their own laws of gravitation and their natural trend is along the lines of least resistance: some violent attraction such as an eight-card suit will cause abnormal perturbation throughout the deck, pulling the cards out of their natural orbits even though they be governed by the laws of great numbers. A crystallization process somewhat similar to the formation of crystals on a frosted window has taken place. And in the same way that a certain geological formation offers a good chance of finding oil, while some other geological formation definitely excludes even the possibility, a hand pattern is frequently of use, especially in freaks, in determining the suit formations of the unknown hands. A few keen players have subconsciously realized this fact. If one suit is ruffed they begin to look for a ruff in another; or, if one suit breaks very badly, to fear a similar

bad break in another. The main province of the Law of Symmetry is the abnormal, the monstrous, the freakish. If the theory of probabilities deals mainly with the study of normality in the world of cards, the Law of Symmetry is occupied with its pathology.

There are thirty-nine suit or hand patterns, starting with the most common, the 4-4-3-2, and ending with the patterns, such as 11-2-0-0, which, like the rarest of comets, gravitate on the outermost bounds of the distributional constellations —millions of light-deals away. In the Law of Symmetry we are not concerned, at least not directly, with the frequencies or probabilities of various suit or hand patterns; we are mainly interested in their types. Thus the common balanced type of 5-3-3-2 is a blood cousin to the unusual but stodgy 7-2-2-2; while the unbalanced type 5-4-3-1 is intimately related to the swan-like grace of a 7-4-1-1. The balanced type is a hand or suit pattern which contains no singleton and usually no second long suit. The unbalanced type always contains a singleton and usually a second four-card or longer suit.

A glance will show that there is a definite racial affinity among the members of the family of the balanced type and among the members of the unbalanced type. But these two races of distributional patterns are as different from each other as the race of truck horses from Arabian steeds. It is only natural that a certain consanguinity would exist between a 4-4-3-2 and a 6-3-2-2 during the process of suit formation. Mathematically speaking, a 4-4-4-1 and a 5-4-3-1 are miles apart, the former occurring in three per cent of all cases and the latter in twenty-two per cent. Actually, however, they are far more closely related to each other than a 5-4-3-1 is related to its mathematical counterpart, the 5-3-3-2, which occurs only a little bit more frequently.

The 5-4-2-2 and the 5-4-4-0 are in a somewhat peculiar position. They both carry a second long suit but actually they belong to the squatty, solidly built, balanced types. A zero being an even number, the 5-4-4-0 belongs to the balanced family. It follows, for instance, that with a 5-4-4-0 the declarer, if Q 4 3 2 in trumps are outstanding, will play for a drop—not finesse as in the case of a 5-4-3-1 pattern.

Any suit or hand pattern contains a long suit and its remainders. The remainders of a balanced type are called balanced and those of an unbalanced type are unbalanced. For instance, the remainders of 6-3-2-2 are balanced, while the remainders of 6-4-2-1 are unbalanced. The even number 2 is the dominant characteristic of balanced remainders and the odd number 1 distinguishes the unbalanced.

Typical Balanced Hand Patterns

♠ K 7 4 2	♠ Q 10 8	♠ A K Q J 6 5
♥ A 6 4	♥ A K 4 3 2	♥ 4 2
♦ K 6	♦ 10 5	♦ 6 2
♣ Q J 10 7	♣ A J 9	♣ J 10 9

Typical Unbalanced Hand Patterns

♠ K 7 4 2	♠ Q 10 8	♠ A K Q J 6 5
♥ A	♥ A K 4 3 2	♥ 4
♦ K 6 5 3	♦ 5	♦ 6 2
♣ Q J 10 7	♣ A J 10 9	♣ J 10 9 7

The suit and hand patterns of any deal can be expressed in a special table (of which an example is given on the next page) which shows the distributions of the four suits in horizontal lines, and the distributions of the four hands in vertical lines. We can, therefore, call these distributions, in the terms of their arrangement in the table, as horizontal (the suit distributions) and vertical (the hand patterns).

	♠ K ♥ J 9 7 ♦ K Q 8 5 4 ♣ Q 10 9 8	
♠ A Q 6 ♥ A 10 5 4 3 ♦ 7 6 ♣ 6 5 4	N W E S	♠ 10 9 8 5 2 ♥ K ♦ A 10 2 ♣ A K 3 2
	♠ J 7 4 3 ♥ Q 8 6 2 ♦ J 9 3 ♣ J 7	

Suit Distributions (*Read across*)	Hand Patterns (*Read down*)			
	South	*West*	*North*	*East*
Spades	4	3	1	5
Hearts	4	5	3	1
Diamonds	3	2	5	3
Clubs	2	3	4	4

APPLICATION OF THE LAW OF SYMMETRY

There often exists a striking parallelism or affinity between two balanced or two unbalanced suit and hand patterns. Thus, if one hand is balanced is it probable that somewhere around the table there is another balanced hand. This does not mean that the correspondence is exact, but simply that the various types of kindred distributions, like gloves, are apt to come in pairs. So if you see a 5-4-3-1 in your hand, its brother or cousin hand pattern is probably hiding around the corner.

What is far more extraordinary is that, in addition to the correspondence between two related hand patterns, there is a close correspondence between at least one hand pattern and a suit pattern. Thus, if you hold a 5-3-3-2 type of hand pattern there is very probably somewhere a suit also distributed 5-3-3-2 or in a similar balanced fashion. It is also extremely likely that the balanced type is formed by the remainder of your own long suit. Again, if you hold a 6-4-2-1 hand pattern, there is a suit somewhere which is distributed in a similar unbalanced manner, and it is quite likely that this 'affinity' suit is your own. In other words, the remainder of your six-card suit will probably be unbalanced.

Finally, this double trend of the attraction of a hand pattern to a like hand pattern and of a hand pattern to a like suit pattern is not localized but tends to extend throughout the entire deck, forming, so to speak, a balanced or unbalanced deal. The occurrence of these events is quite at variance with the simple mathematical probabilities. The normal patterns tend to expand into a sub-normal region; and the freakish patterns tend to spread out through all the pasteboards like a drop of oil on paper.

The above facts may be summarized in the following two theorems:

1. A balanced hand pattern is generally accompanied by at least one other balanced hand pattern, and an unbalanced hand pattern is generally accompanied by another unbalanced hand pattern. The more unbalanced the pattern, the greater the expectation that another hand will be of the same type.

2. A balanced hand pattern is generally accompanied by a similar balanced pattern in at least one of the four suits, and an unbalanced hand pattern by a similar unbalanced pattern in some suit, usually the one in which the hand in question is the longest. The more freakish the hand pattern, the greater the expectancy of a similar freakish distribution of the longest suit.

It will be noted that in the deal previously shown South's hand is 4-4-3-2, and so is the club suit; West's hand is 5-3-3-2, to which the distribution of the diamond suit conforms; the other two hands and the other two suits are 5-4-3-1. Here there is perfect symmetry; for every hand pattern there is an identical suit distribution.

Once more the reader should be warned that these theorems merely express the trends and not certainties or even strong probabilities. To use the Law of Symmetry as the main guide in the bidding and play would be disastrous: but to use it as a prop, a practical aid to the bidding and playing inferences as well as to the theory of percentages, is definitely valuable.

The Law of Symmetry is chiefly useful in teaching one when to expect the unexpected. In the play it is particularly valuable as a basis for deciding, in borderline cases, when to finesse and when to play for the drop, and, even more, when to plan the play on the basis of bad breaks. In bidding its greatest value is in serving as a warning to watch one's step when holding an unbalanced pattern, where the danger of unfavourable break is increased, while with a balanced pattern the expectancy of an average break is increased.

For instance, I pick up

♠ A K 9 6 4 3 ♥ 5 ♦ A Q 7 5 4 ♣ 8

It would be the height of naïveté to lean too heavily upon the expectation of 'average' break of either of my long suits.

I would accordingly conduct the bidding very gingerly, expecting either a long heart or a long club suit with an abnormal remainder and possibly a 4-4-4-1 distribution in one of them. My spade suit may break evenly, but if the diamond suit breaks 5-5-2-1 then the spades will follow it. Take out this hand from the deck and deal the remaining thirty-nine cards, observing what happens.

If I hold a seven- or an eight-card suit I expect one or two other very long suits. With a hand pattern 7-4-1-1 I am not so happy about my seven-card suit, for it is astonishing how often it will break 7-4-1-1. It is one thing to hold ♦ A K Q 3 2 with a 5-4-3-1 hand pattern and quite another thing if the hand pattern is 5-3-3-2.

The hand pattern 4-3-3-3, while it usually indicates a number of 4-4-3-2's, 4-3-3-3's, and 5-3-3-2's around the table, is sometimes the most deceiving symptom of all. It may be the tail end of violent distributional storms which are raging in other hands. It is the peculiarity of the 4-3-3-3 hand that it often serves as a joiner between the freakish and normal distributions. Hence in bidding I am always careful to step lightly with a 4-3-3-3 unless well heeled.

♠ K
♥ K Q 9 8 7 5 4 2
♦ —
♣ A J 5 3

♠ 9
♥ 6
♦ A J 9 5 4 3
♣ Q 10 8 6 2

N
W E
S

♠ 8 6 5 2
♥ A J 3
♦ Q 10 7
♣ K 9 4

	S	W	N	E
♠	7	1	1	4
♥	1	1	8	3
♦	4	6	0	3
♣	1	5	4	3

♠ A Q J 10 7 4 3
♥ 10
♦ K 8 6 2
♣ 7

The Law of Symmetry deals principally with distributions rather than with individual honours, and this aspect of it is the only one with which we shall concern ourselves in this volume. It may be well in passing, however, to note that

there are also remarkable correspondences between honours, which suggest that the law may have a much wider application. For instance, if a player holds a singleton King it will happen much more often than probability warrants that another singleton King is in the offing.[1] Similarly with Queens and other singleton honours. Sometimes, by a strange quirk of suit formations, a singleton honour may evoke a singleton lower honour or vice versa. Even more extraordinary are the cases where a solid sequence in one suit evokes a solid sequence in another suit or a long suit, full of holes, in one hand is in touching affinity with an identical long suit, which is full of identical holes, in another hand.

[1] I am aware that psychologically we are apt to be more struck by the unusual than by the usual and therefore to remember it better, while forgetting the tremendously more numerous instances which did not attract particular notice. To be certain of my conclusions I have for a period of years made actual tests, and am convinced that this is not a psychological illusion.

BOOK III

DECLARER'S PLAY AND DEFENCE

The technique of declarer's play of the dummy and of defenders' leads and play as outlined in this section of Contract Bridge Complete is based on Ely Culbertson's *Red Book on Play*. The Red Book, a 640-page exposition of the modern theory and practice of the play of the cards, treats the science of play from the standpoint of the advanced player, the author, and the teacher of Contract Bridge. In the Red Book the reader will find more detailed material on all subjects covered in the following pages, with hundreds of examples and tabulated matter.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE WINNING OF TRICKS

While there are dozens of plays in Bridge, there are only three ways of winning tricks.

The first kind of trick is called an honour-trick.[1] The second kind of trick is called a long-card trick. The third kind of trick is called a ruffer. The second and third kinds of trick are won with low cards, and are a direct result of differences in suit-lengths around the table.

K Q J

A 4 3 2 | N / W E / S | 7 6 5

10 9 8

West can win the first trick with his Ace, because it is the highest card of the suit. North loses the first trick to the Ace, but now his Queen and King are the highest cards remaining and win tricks for him. These cards win tricks because of their rank.

After the first three tricks have been won by high cards, West has one card of the suit remaining, which, when led, will win a trick (unless trumped) because no higher card of the same suit remains to capture it. This is a *mass* element—pure length value.

North won two tricks, both honour-winners. West also won two tricks, one an honour-winner and one a long card. It follows that the total trick-taking possibilities of any long suit are the sum of ranking and long cards of that suit.

The same principle applies in the case of ruffing tricks, which are the result of a void in the suit led and a card of the trump suit with which to win the trick.

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[1] An honour-card is technically a ten or higher card. Often a nine or lower card may win a trick by virtue of its rank, when the higher cards have been played. Such cards, honour or lower, which may win or promote the winning of a trick, may be called 'ranking cards'.

THE PRINCIPLE OF PROMOTION

As each high-ranking card is played to win a trick, or is 'captured' or 'dropped' by a still higher ranking card, all the remaining cards of the same suit move up one step in rank.

If on the first trick the King is played and the Ace captures it, the Queen controls the second round of the suit. If the Jack, Queen, King and Ace all fall together on one trick, the ten has in one operation become the most important card of its suit.

A player should always consider the promotional value of his honours. He can make the Principle of Promotion operate in his favour:

1. By forcing his opponents to use two ranking cards to effect the capture of one;

2. By preventing an opponent from covering (capturing) his own ranking card whenever possible.

1. A Q 8 2

K 6 4 | N / W E / S | 10 7 5

J 9 3

2. A 4 3

5 2 | N / W E / S | K 10 9 8

Q J 7 6

In Figure 1, South leads the Jack. If West plays low, North can also play low, for the Jack will win the trick. Next South will lead the three, West will play the six, and North will win with the Queen. The Ace remaining in North's hand, East and West will never win a trick. If West had covered the Jack with his King, the Ace would in turn have recaptured the King; but since two of North-South's high cards fell at once, East's ten would have been promoted to second rank in the suit and would have won the third trick.

In Figure 2, if South plays the Queen and allows East to capture it with his King, East will still have 10 9 8, only two of which can be captured by North's Ace and South's Jack. East must win two tricks. If South plays to prevent the capture of his Queen, he can win three tricks against East's one. First a low card is led to the Ace; then a low card is led from the North hand toward South's Queen and Jack. If East plays the King, South plays low and retains the two highest cards, both of which will win tricks. If East

plays low, South wins with the Jack and still has the Queen, which can be promoted to winning rank by another lead from the North hand.

STOPPERS

A suit such as K Q J 10 9 may properly be counted as four sure winners. The opponents' Ace, being the highest card, cannot be prevented from winning, but when the Ace has been played the other four cards, by the principle of promotion, will have become so many Aces.

Yet, while the Ace is held by an opponent, the suit K Q J 10 9 will not win a single trick. Before the cards of this suit can be cashed in as tricks the Ace must be removed. The run of the suit is *stopped* by the Ace.

A stopper is a card or combination of cards which can win a trick and which must be removed before other cards of the same suit can be established and turned into tricks.

The plays of suit establishment consist in removal of stoppers. There are as many methods of play in suit establishment as there are kinds of stoppers.

GUARDS AND SUIT-DISTRIBUTION

A card which accompanies a higher card of the same suit is called a *guard*. In Q 3, the three is a guard. Each additional small card constitutes another guard. In J 8 6 4, the Jack is 'three times guarded'.

By giving up the worthless cards which guard it for the opponents' valuable cards, a ranking card is promoted into a winner. A King needs but one guard; a Queen needs two guards; a Jack, three.

When a ranking card is not accompanied by as many guards as there are higher honours in the opponents' hands, it will 'drop' on the lead of a higher honour.

In the example shown, the Queen in West's hand is not well enough guarded. South, employing one of the most common methods of suit establishment, leads out the spade Ace and King. West's Queen drops, setting up the Jack in South's hand. Transfer one of the low

spades from East's hand to West's, and West could have followed to each of the first two leads with low cards. South's play for a drop would have failed, for at the third trick West would have had the Queen, stopping the suit.

STRAIGHT LEADS FROM SEQUENCES

Previously it was stated that 'there are as many methods of play in suit establishment as there are kinds and combinations of stoppers.' Broadly speaking, there are two kinds of stoppers: strong and probable.

Strong stoppers are practically sure tricks—an Ace, K Q, Q J 10, J 10 9 8 or other solid honour combination. Unless they can be ruffed, these stoppers are not to be prevented from winning tricks, provided they are held in a suit the opponents must establish.

Probable stoppers are guarded honours such as K x, Q x x, or similar combinations which may, as will be seen later, be trapped by the opponents.

In the case of a strong stopper, the only means of eliminating it is by sacrificing a trick to it—a sort of exchange of prisoners. This is the simplest type of suit establishment, and is used when holding a strong sequence.

Three or more cards of the same suit, in consecutive order of rank form a sequence. Thus, K Q J 6 5 or Q J 10 8 3 are suits headed by sequences. A two-card combination such as K Q, though technically 'in sequence' is known in Bridge terminology not as a sequence but as 'equals'. The value of a sequence is that all its cards are equals, so that the lowest card of the sequence assumed a rank equivalent to that of the highest.

With such combinations as these:

K Q J	Q 10 6	Q 6 5	J 10 9 8	6 4 2
N W E S	N W E S	N W E S	N W E S	N W E S
4 3 2	J 7 3	K J 7	5 3 2	Q J 10

Lead out one of your equals; allow an opponent to win with his

higher card. If your remaining cards are not yet established, lead another one when you regain the lead, and so on until your suit is established.

POSITION

Usually a suit is not headed by a strong sequence, but by some broken honour combination from which one or more honours are missing. In such cases, the question of whether or not a trick must be lost to a missing honour depends upon how well it is guarded and upon its *position.*

A card which is not the highest of its suit loses its value when it must be played before an opponent holding a higher card plays. But when the opponent holding the higher card must play first, the secondary card, provided it is guarded, will win a trick.

When the cards are divided as in the following diagram, South will win three tricks, capturing every trick but East's Ace, *if East must play first to every trick:*

♥ 5 4 3

♥ 6 2 — N / W E / S — ♥ A Q 10 8

♥ K J 9 7

But so tremendous is the positional value of cards that East would win every trick if South were repeatedly forced to play from his own hand.

Apart from the method of leading out strong sequences, the two forms of establishing honour-tricks are plays for a drop (based on the supposition or hope that the opponents' honour is unguarded) and finesses (based on the hope that the missing honour, while guarded, is in a position disadvantageous to its holder). The player chooses between these alternative methods after determining how much likelihood there is of finding the honour guarded.

A card that is not the highest of its suit can be captured by playing for a drop if it is alone or insufficiently guarded. A play for a drop consists simply in leading out high cards, hoping that an opponent, forced by the laws of the game to follow suit, must play his lower ranking card.

J 10 8 6 5	J 10 8 6 5	J 10 8 6 5
Q 3 — N / W E / S	K — N / W E / S — 9	N / W E / S — K 9
A K 9 7 4 2	A Q 7 5 3 2	A Q 7 4 3 2

In the first example, South has only to lead out his Ace and King; he knows the Queen will drop, establishing the Jack, because only two cards are outstanding. In the second example if South leads his Ace, playing for a drop, he will win all the tricks, for the King is unguarded. But in the third example, if South leads his Ace, East will follow suit with the nine and win a trick with the King; whereas if North leads the five and East plays the nine, South can win the trick with his Queen and save the Ace to capture the King later.

The play for a drop is easy to execute; the only difficulty is in knowing when the missing honour is likely to be unguarded. Below are the logical steps that take place in every player's mind when he is deciding how to play a suit:

CULBERTSON RULE OF FIVE STEPS

Assume the dummy to be exposed, and consider declarer's and dummy's cards as the same suit.

1. Subtract the combined length of the suit in their hands from 13, and divide the remainder by 2 (as nearly as possible).

2. Assume that the highest ranking outstanding card is held by the opponent who has the longer portion of the suit.

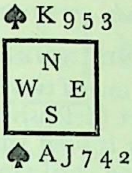
Usually the first two steps will be the ones to follow in deciding whether or not the outstanding honour is sufficiently guarded, or is insufficiently guarded and will drop.

3. Consider that one opponent has one card more than his half, and the other opponent one less.

4. Place the two highest ranking cards outstanding in the hand of the opponent who holds the longer portion, and if possible protect against losing to both these cards.

5. Now assume the worst possible division and look for a safety play (Chapter XLIV).

TO ILLUSTRATE THE RULE OF FIVE STEPS



STEP 1. 5 plus 4 equals 9, subtracted from 13 leaves 4 cards in the opponents' hands. Four divided by 2 equals 2.

STEP 2. With two cards in each opponent's hand, the holdings are Q x and 10 x. The Queen will drop on leads of the Ace and King.

STEP 3. If the outstanding spades are divided in the next most probable way, one opponent holds 3 and the other 1.

STEP 4. Placing both the Queen and ten with the three-card holding, one opponent has Q 10 x. If East has this holding, a finesse to the Ace-Jack will succeed.

STEP 5. If either opponent holds Q 10 8 6: suppose West holds it and the King is first played; West will now hold Q 10 8, and South A J 7 4. Due to West's position (playing after South, when dummy leads the suit) West will win two tricks. But if the Ace is first played, East will fail to follow suit and West can be held to one trick. Likewise, if East holds Q 10 8 6 and the Ace is first played, East can win only one trick, for the Jack is in position to play after East, and cannot be captured by East's Queen.

In this case, South can utilize the most favourable division (2-2) by playing for a drop, and likewise guard against the worst division (4-0) by first playing the Ace from his hand.

The table of probabilities (page 435) will serve as a constant check on the results of the Rule of Five Steps.

THE FINESSE

When probabilities do not favour the play for a drop, the alternative method is a finesse.

THE FINESSE DEFINED

A formal definition of a finesse is: *An attempt to win a trick with a card which is not the highest of the suit led.*

A strategic definition of a finesse is: *An attempt to win a trick*

by utilizing the possible favourable position of one or more higher cards in the opponents' hands.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT FINESSES

All finesses belong to one of two fundamental types, direct (attacking) and indirect (defensive).

1. An indirect finesse is used when the finesser wishes to avoid having his ranking card covered by an opponent.

2. A direct finesse is used when the finesser wishes to force the opponents to cover his ranking card.

FIGURE 1

QJ6

852 | N / W E / S | K43

A1097

This finesse is direct, or attacking

FIGURE 2

Q43

K92 | N / W E / S | J105

A876

This finesse is indirect, or defensive

In Figure 1, North leads the Queen. If East plays low, the Queen will win the trick. If East covers, South recaptures with the Ace and has promoted the Jack and ten to winning rank.

In Figure 2, if North led the Queen and South played low, West would win with the King; but likewise, if the East-West cards were transposed and North led the Queen, North would cover with the King and after South won with the Ace West would hold the winning cards for the next two tricks, the Jack and ten. South would win only one trick. Therefore South plays an indirect finesse by laying down the Ace first, then leading toward the Queen. If West plays low the Queen wins, if West plays the King the Queen controls the third round. South and North win two tricks.

A finesse against one outstanding card is a simple finesse

1. 32

J10 | N / W E / S | K6

AQ

2. 432

A97 | N / W E / S | Q82

KJ10

3. Q 6 2

A 8 3 | N / W E / S | K 10 7

J 9 4

When North leads and South plays the lower card of the tenace, the cards of the tenace assume the function of *equals*, and the value of the tenace is equivalent to the value of a sequence.

When the tenace is accompanied by one or more equals of the lower tenace card, as in Figure 2 above, the finesse may be repeated by leading again toward the tenace. Sometimes an outstanding honour is well guarded at the start, but one or more finesses remove the small cards which guard it and then a play for a drop will succeed.

DIRECT SIMPLE FINESSES

When the cards of a tenace are not in the same hand, the tenace cannot be turned into a sequence by finessing unless at least one equal of the lower tenace-card is held.

1. J 6 3

10 8 4 | N / W E / S | K 7 5

A Q 9

2. J 10 6

9 5 2 | N / W E / S | K 7 4

A Q 3

3. J 10 5

A 8 3 | N / W E / S | Q 6 2

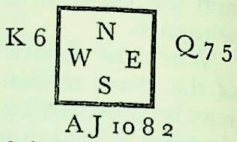
K 7 4

In Figure 1, North's Jack does not increase the winning power of South's tenace, for if the Jack is led East's King will cover it and West's ten will win a trick. In Figure 2, North has the ten as well as the Jack, and if East covers the Jack North will win the third trick. In Figure 3, South can win only one trick; a direct finesse can be made against East's Queen once but not twice. If North held J 10 9, two finesses could be taken.

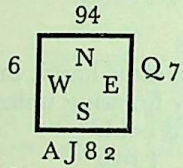
DOUBLE FINESSES

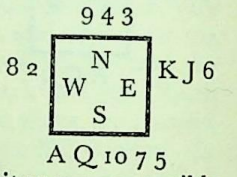
When there are two intervening key cards outstanding, two separate finesses may be made against them, known as a double finesse. The double finesse consists of two steps, of which the first step has the simple effect of reducing the situation to the common denominator of the simple finesse.

In this diagram, the King and Queen are held by the opponents. The Rule of Five Steps reveals the probability that neither honour will drop, so if South led the Ace he would lose two tricks. Using the double finesse method, North leads the three, East plays low, South plays the ten, and West wins with the King.



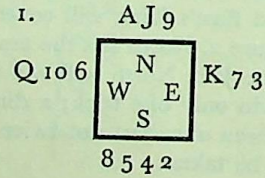
The position is now the same as though South held A Q and East the King, for the principle of promotion has made South's A J the best and third-best cards of the suit, and East's Queen the second best. North again leads, and when East plays the seven South wins with the Jack. His loss, played this way, is only one trick. An identical situation is found in the diagram to the right, except that when East holds both missing honours South's finesse of the ten on the first round wins the trick, and South later takes a simple finesse against the King, losing no trick in the suit; if the honours are split, South will lose one finesse, but win the other. In playing such a combination it is better to finesse the ten on the first round in an attempt to win all the tricks, except when anxious to clear the suit as soon as possible.



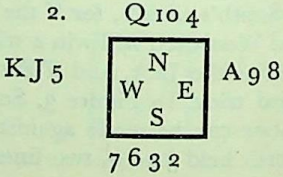


A *triple finesse* is a play against three outstanding cards. Again, it is a problem of bringing about the simple finesse position.

1.



2.



In Figure 1 South leads low, West low, North plays the *nine*. This forces East's King and the remaining cards leave West's Queen trapped in a simple finesse. The play of the nine is a finesse within a finesse—seeking to make North's J 9 combination act as equals, so that it will be as though North held A J 10. In Figure 2, a finesse of the ten on the first round draws East's Ace and later a lead through West's King yields a trick.

PRINCIPLE OF ECONOMY OF HONOURS

Much of the play of declarer and defenders consists in the struggle to force opponents to give up their ranking cards for small cards. Even with seemingly solid sequences, every effort should be made to lead toward a guarded high card or sequence. Especial care is required when leading toward a tenace.

1.

	8 7	
9 6 5 3 2	N / W E / S	A
	K Q J 10 4	

2.

	10 4 3	
9 7 5 2	N / W E / S	K
	A Q J 8 6	

Though Figure 1 is an exaggerated case, it happens frequently. If South leads a card from his powerful sequence it will fall to the Ace and West, with the guarded nine, will have a stopper; if the first lead is made by North, South may throw his small card on the Ace and win four tricks.

The ten in Figure 2 is a *ranking card*; let it be covered by East, and a brand-new stopper is created in West's hand.

A simple rule for beginners (and some experts) is:

When playing to a finesse, *play the lowest*, except when prepared to stand for the cover (that is, when holding in either hand the card next lower than the card led).

WHEN TO COVER AN HONOUR

When declarer or dummy leads an honour to a finesse, by covering it with a higher honour you will either win the trick or force declarer to use two honours to capture your one. If you or your partner hold any ranking card in the suit, this wholesale use of declarer's honours will hasten the promo-

tion of yours by one full step. Therefore you should cover an honour whenever you hold, *or your partner may hold*, any ranking card whose promotion to a winning position will thus be made more rapid.

An honour led must not be covered when it is evident that no trick may be promoted for yourself or partner.

1.

	A J 7	
K 8 5	N / W E / S	Q 9 6
	10 4 3 2	

2.

	A J 10 8	
K 5 2	N / W E / S	9 7 6 4
	Q 3	

3.

	A J 10 9	
K 6 5 3	N / W E / S	8 7 4
	Q 2	

In Figure 1, South leads the ten. West, by covering, can promote East's nine to third rank in the suit, causing East to have a perfect tenace over North's Jack; if West failed to cover the ten, East's nine would never be promoted and on the next round West's King would be finessed. In Figure 2, South leads the Queen; West, though he cannot see South's or his partner's hand, knows that East may hold a card higher than dummy's eight. By covering the Queen, West can promote the nine in East's hand two steps at once, so that it will control the fourth round. In Figure 3, West should not cover because dummy's suit is solid; East cannot hold any card which may be promoted.

When one of two equal honours is led from dummy, do not cover; the second honour, if led, can be covered with equal effect. Likewise, when declarer leads an honour which *may* be one of equal honours, do not cover unless the card led, if not covered, would win the trick.

1.

	A 8 7	
K 4 3	N / W E / S	10 6 5
	Q J 9 2	

2.

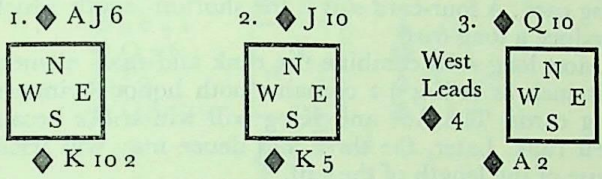
	A 8 7	
Q 4 3	N / W E / S	K 9 6 2
	J 10 5	

In Figure 1, South leads the Queen. If South is the dummy, West knows he should not cover, since dummy also holds the Jack. If West covered, North would win the Ace and lead back toward the J 9, successfully finessing East's ten.

In Figure 2, South leads the Jack. West should play low; and if the Jack is finessed to East's King, South cannot finesse again, for West would cover the ten and establish East's nine. If West covered the Jack, the first honour led, North's Ace would win and the ten could be established for a second North-South trick by a lead through East's King.

THE TWO-WAY FINESSE

Many combinations offer a choice between two types of finesses:



In Figure 1, shall the finesse for the Queen be taken through East or through West? In Figure 2, shall the Jack be led and finessed, hoping East has the Queen and the Jack will force out the Ace; or shall South put up the King, hoping East has the Ace? In Figure 3, shall North's ten be played, hoping West has the Jack, or shall North's Queen be played, hoping West has the King?

The disclosures through bidding often *place* the outstanding high cards (Chapter XLII). In other cases, declarer must resign himself to a guess.

CHAPTER XXXIX

LOW-CARD TRICKS

In the preceding chapters our only interest in low cards was as guardians to their masters. We will now take up the technique of establishing tricks from low cards, consisting of long cards and ruffers.

LONG-SUIT ESTABLISHMENT

A card of a suit remaining in one hand, after all the opponents' cards of that suit have been played, is called a long card. A four-card suit is the shortest length which can produce a long card.

Most long suits combine the rank and mass elements. A suit such as A K 4 3 2 contains both honour-winners and long cards. The Ace and King will win tricks because of their rank. Later, the three and deuce may win tricks because of the length of the suit.

1.

	6 5 4	
J 10 9	N / W E / S	8 7
	A K Q 3 2	

2.

	9 8 7	
A K Q	N / W E / S	J 10
	6 5 4 3 2	

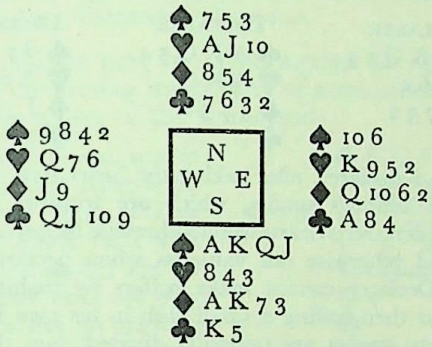
In Figure 1 South leads the Ace, King and Queen, which eliminate the opponents' cards. The 3 2 are now established. At first glance it seems that the A K Q have made the suit, but it is only a case of optical illusion in Bridge. The two long cards were always there and made themselves, by virtue of greater length. In Figure 2, three leads will still establish two long cards for South, but they will be losing leads.

To establish a long suit, first make the correct play to develop what tricks you can with honours—by leading out a sequence, by playing for a drop, or by finessing, whichever is proper. You are at the same time eliminating cards of the

suit from your opponents' hands. When you have exhausted the possibilities of your honour-tricks, proceed to establish your long cards by sacrifice.

THE USE OF PROBABILITIES

The most even division of the opponents' cards is not always the most probable—see the table on page 439. It is of great value to know what chance of success a suit-establishment play has, in order that a proper choice may be made between alternative lines of play.



In this hand, South is declarer at three no-trump, so he needs nine tricks. West leads the Queen of clubs, East wins the Ace and returns a club. South takes the King—one trick. He can also win four high spades, two high diamonds and the heart Ace. He must establish one more winner. In diamonds he has a possible long card; but probabilities do not favour a 3-3 division of the outstanding diamonds. In hearts there is a possible double finesse to add the ninth trick. Probabilities favour finding the missing heart honours so divided between the opponents' hands that the double finesse may be expected to gain a trick. South chooses the finesse in hearts and makes his contract.

SHORT-SUIT ESTABLISHMENT

Three or fewer cards of the same suit are called a short suit, or remainders. Short suits have their value at trump bids, where they give rise to ruffers.

A trick made by ruffing a losing card with an otherwise worthless card of the trump suit is called a ruffer.

A ruffer adds an extra trick only when the card ruffed would otherwise be a loser, and when the trump used for ruffing has no independent value as a high card or long card. If either of these conditions is missing, the ruffer does not gain a trick but is only a *duplication play*.

1.	2.	3.
♠ 10 9 8	♠ 10 8 7	♠ A K Q
♥ 3	♥ 3	♥ 3
♦ K Q 10 4	♦ K Q 10 4	♦ K Q 10 4
♣ A 6 5 4 2	♣ A 6 5 4 2	♣ A 6 5 4 2
DUMMY	DUMMY	DUMMY
DECLARER	DECLARER	DECLARER
♠ A K Q 5 4	♠ A K Q 5 4	♠ 8 7 5 4 3
♥ A 6 2	♥ A K Q	♥ A 6 2
♦ J 7 5 2	♦ J 7 5 2	♦ J 7 5 2
♣ 7	♣ 7	♣ 7

In Figure 1 declarer, after taking the heart Ace, will ruff the ♥ 6 2 with dummy's spades, which are trumps. This creates ruffers, since declarer's hearts would otherwise be lost and dummy's spades would otherwise fall valueless when declarer plays the ♠ A K Q. Declarer cannot make ruffers by cashing dummy's club Ace and then ruffing a small club in his own hand; for, if the opponents' spades are normally divided, 3-2, they will fall when declarer leads his high trumps, and the low spades in declarer's hand will win tricks as long cards.

Likewise, in Figure 2 it will not help declarer to ruff his hearts, which will win tricks when led, if unmolested; and in Figure 3, though declarer's hearts are losers, to ruff them with dummy's spades will be sacrificing the tricks which the high spades in dummy would have won when led.

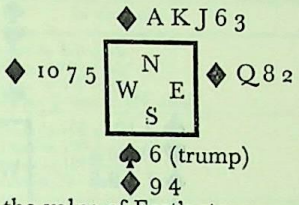
The method of establishing a ruffer is a very simple one: the short suit (doubleton or singleton) is led until a void is created. Then, if the suit is led by another player, a trick may be won by ruffing it. Even a three-card suit may eventually make possible a ruffer, if partner has four cards of the suit and its division makes the establishment of a long card impossible.

RUFFING OUT STOPPERS

The ruffing process allows plain suits to be established

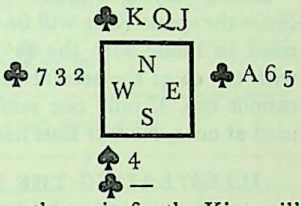
with no loss or with minimum loss despite powerful stoppers in the opponents' hands, because the losers can be ruffed.

At the right is shown a case in which a trick would ordinarily be lost to East's Queen before the long cards in diamonds could be established; but in this case, after the Ace and King have been played South ruffs a third round of diamonds with the ♠ 6, killing the value of East's stopper and establishing the long diamonds without loss.



At times a finesse may be taken against an opponent's high card by combining the powers of a sequence, a void, and the ruffing power of the trump suit.

In the example shown, spades are trumps; the club King is led from the North hand. If East plays his Ace, South ruffs with the ♠ 4 and the ♣ Q J are established; if East does not play his Ace South has no need to trump, but can discard a loser from another suit, for the King will win the trick.



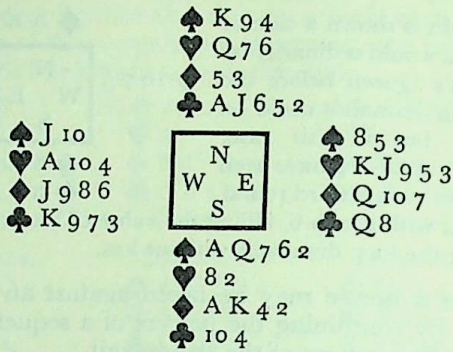
In effect, this method of play is no different from a finesse in which South holds the ♣ Ace, East the ♣ King and North ♣ Q J 10. The relative value of the cards is the same, with South's trump acting as a super-Ace.

THE DANGER OF OVER-RUFFS

Knowledge of probable suit-distributions is of as great importance in the use of ruffers as in the establishment of long suits. An attempt to ruff a losing card with one of dummy's small trumps must always be attended by the fear that an opponent, being also void in the suit, can snatch the trick away from dummy by playing a higher trump. Especial care should be taken to ruff with *as high a trump as can conveniently be spared.*

However, when two or more ruffers will be needed, do not

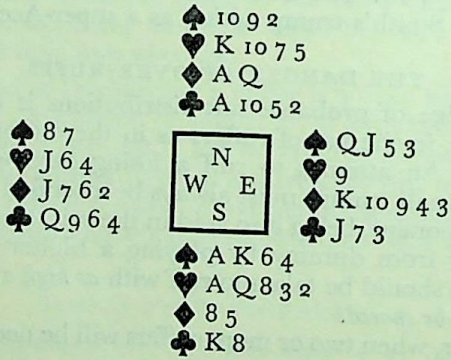
make the typical beginner's mistake of ruffing too high the *first* time, and low the second time.



South, playing a spade contract, plans to ruff two diamonds. Since the spade King will be needed to draw trumps, the two ruffs must be made with the ♠ 9 and ♠ 4. The first ruff should be with the ♠ 4; the second ruff will be with the ♠ 9, which East cannot top. If only one ruff were necessary, the ♠ 9 would be used at once, for fear East had originally held only two diamonds.

ILLUSTRATING THE PRINCIPLE OF PROMOTION FINESSING

As each high ranking card is played, every lower card of the suit moves up one step in rank. A three can be a 'high card' if the only other card of the suit remaining is the deuce.



THE SIMPLE PROBABILITIES

SUIT DIVISIONS

If you and your Partner *together* hold *in one suit:*	The cards of that suit in your Opponent's hands will be divided:
6 cards	**4–3** 62 times in 100 deals 5–2 31 times in 100 deals 6–1 7 times in 100 deals 7–0 Less than 1 time in 200 deals
7 cards	**4–2** 48 times in 100 deals 3–3 36 times in 100 deals 5–1 15 times in 100 deals 6–0 1 time in 100 deals
8 cards	**3–2** 68 times in 100 deals 4–1 28 times in 100 deals 5–0 4 times in 100 deals
9 cards	**3–1** 50 times in 100 deals 2–2 40 times in 100 deals 4–0 10 times in 100 deals
10 cards	**2–1** 78 times in 100 deals 3–0 22 times in 100 deals
11 cards	**2–1** 52 times in 100 deals 2–0 48 times in 100 deals

DIVISION OF OUTSTANDING HONOURS

If opponents hold **2** *honours:*

They will be divided 52 times in 100 deals
Both will be in one hand 48 times in 100 deals

If opponents hold **1** *honour:*	*Guarded Once*	*Guarded Twice*
	per cent	per cent
If they have: 3 cards it will be ..	52	22
4 cards it will be ..	40	38
5 cards it will be ..	28	40
6 cards it will be ..	18	54

HAND PATTERNS

(Distribution of four suits in one hand)

Balanced Patterns	Frequency*	Unbalanced Patterns	Frequency*
	per cent		per cent
4–4–3–2	22	4–4–4–1	3
4–3–3–3	10	5–4–3–1	13
5–3–3–2	16	5–5–2–1	3
5–4–2–2	11	6–4–2–1	5
6–3–2–2	6	6–3–3–1	3
**5–4–4–0	1.20	5–5–3–0	0.90
7–2–2–2	0.50	6–5–1–1	0.70
	—	6–4–3–0	1.30

* Approximately. ** A balanced freak.

CULBERTSON
STANDARD TABLE OF FINESSES

	You and Partner Hold: You	You and Partner Hold: Partner	Opponents Hold	First Lead	First Play	Second Lead	Second Play
SIMPLE FINESSES	K x	x x	Ace	Partner x	You K		
	Q x x	A x x	King	Partner A	You x	Partner x	You Q
	A Q	x x	King	Partner x	You Q		
	A K J	x x x	Queen	You K	Partner x	Partner x	You J
	A x x	Q J x x	King	You A	Partner x	You x	Partner J
	A K x x	J x x	Queen	You A	Partner x	You x	Partner J
	A Q x x	J x x	King	Partner x	You Q		
DOUBLE FINESSES	A Q 10[1]	x x x	K-J	Partner x	You 10	Partner x	You Q
	A J 10[2]	x x x	K-Q	Partner x	You 10	Partner x	You J
	K J x[3]	x x x	A-Q	Partner x	You J	Partner x	You K
	Q J x	x x x	A-K	Partner x	You J	Partner x	You Q
	K 10 x	Q x x	A-J	You x	Partner Q	Partner x	You 10
	A x x	Q 10 x	K-J	You A	Partner x	You x	Partner 10 or Q*
	A 10 x	Q x x	K-J	Partner x	You 10	*or as Type*	*2 above*
	A J x	x x x	K-Q	Partner x	You J		
	A K 10	x x x	Q-J	Partner x	You 10†		
TRIPLE FINESSES	A Q 9	x x x	K-J-10	Partner x	You 9‡	Partner x	You Q
	A J 9	x x x	K-Q-10	Partner x	You 9	Partner x	You J
	K J 9 x	x x x	A-Q-10	Partner x	You 9	Partner x	You J
	K 10 x	x x x	A-Q-J	Partner x	You 10	Partner x	You K
	Q 10 x	x x x	A-K-J	Partner x	You 10	Partner x	You Q
	Q x x	J 9 x	A-K-10	Partner x	You Q	You x	Partner 9

Notes referring to Table of Finesses

1 With nine cards in combined hands, play Q on first round to lose one trick; also see Safety Plays (Chap. 44). 2 This procedure is correct with ten cards or less in combined hands. 3 If only one trick can be lost in suit, either King or Jack may be played first round. * If combined hands hold the 9-spot as well, two finesses should be taken. See Safety Plays (Chap. 44). † Only when right-hand opponent is marked with Q-J (see Chap. 42). ‡ If right-hand opponent plays Jack or ten on first round, cover with Queen.

South	West	North	East
1 ♥	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♦?	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♦?	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
6 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

The Play: Finesse Against a Five

West opens the eight of spades, dummy plays the nine, East the Jack, and South the King. Three rounds of trump are taken ending in the dummy and the ten of spades is led. East covers with the Queen, South wins with the Ace, and West drops the seven. The six of spades is thus the master card of its suit after only two rounds have been played! Moreover, the fall of the seven assures declarer that East has the remaining spades, the five and the three. Dummy is therefore entered with the Ace of clubs and the deuce of spades is led. When East plays the three, South finesses the four. He then discards dummy's losing diamond on the six of spades, thereafter ruffing out his losing diamond for thirteen tricks.

SUIT ESTABLISHMENT

PLAY FOR A DROP *v.* FINESSE

Even when the odds favour a play for a drop, tactical considerations may make a finesse necessary.

	♠ A 8 ♥ 9 2 ♦ A Q J 6 2 ♣ 10 6 4 2	
♠ Q J 10 7 ♥ — ♦ 10 8 5 4 3 ♣ K 9 7 5	N W E S	♠ K 6 5 4 ♥ Q 8 7 6 ♦ 9 ♣ A J 8 3
	♠ 9 3 2 ♥ A K J 10 5 4 3 ♦ K 7 ♣ Q	

North	East	South	West
1 ♦	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 NT	Pass	4 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

The Play: Saving a Stopper

West opens the Queen of spades, dummy winning with the Ace. In addition to losing the club and spade, declarer can afford to lose one trump trick, provided it be lost while dummy still has a trump to stop the spade suit. Despite the combined holding of nine trumps, therefore, declarer must not only abandon a play for a drop but must also forgo the standard safety play of taking the first round of trumps with the Ace and finessing on the second round.

The ten of hearts is finessed at the second trick. When West shows out, dummy is entered with a diamond and a second trump finesse is taken. Trumps are then cleared and the King of diamonds is overtaken by dummy's Ace, so that the Queen of diamonds may be led to furnish a discard.

SUIT ESTABLISHMENT

ECONOMY OF HONOURS

Every effort should be made to avoid having high cards covered by opponents' higher cards, by leading toward even a seemingly solid sequence.

	♠ Q 6 4 ♥ J 9 3 ♦ Q 7 4 ♣ Q 9 6 3	
♠ 3 ♥ 10 8 7 4 ♦ K 9 6 3 ♣ 10 8 5 2	N W E S	♠ A K 9 8 ♥ 5 2 ♦ J 10 8 5 2 ♣ 7 4
	♠ J 10 7 5 2 ♥ A K Q 6 ♦ A ♣ A K J	

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	1 NT	Pass
3 ♥	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass		

The Play: Leading to a Sequence

West opens the three of diamonds, declarer winning with the

Ace. South leads a small trump and dummy's Queen is taken by East's King. East returns a small diamond, and South, unwilling to shorten his trump suit, discards the Queen of hearts. West wins with the King of diamonds and returns a club. Dummy puts up the Queen in order to lead a trump. East plays the eight of trumps and South wins with the ten. When West shows out, the wisdom of South's plan becomes apparent, for only by leading again from the dummy can he avoid the loss of two more trump tricks. Dummy is entered once more with the Jack of hearts, which would not have been an entry had South not saved the heart six. Another trump lead limits East to his Ace.

SUIT ESTABLISHMENT

THE BACKWARD FINESSE

Card-reading proves that a normal finesse will lose, but declarer, by a 'backward finesse', wins the trick anyway.

	♠ K Q J ♥ Q 6 4 3 ♦ 8 7 5 ♣ A 9 8	
♠ 9 7 4 2 ♥ 7 ♦ A K Q J 10 ♣ Q 7 4	N W E S	♠ 8 6 3 ♥ A 5 2 ♦ 9 4 3 ♣ 10 5 3 2
	♠ A 10 5 ♥ K J 10 9 8 ♦ 6 2 ♣ K J 6	

The bidding (North-South vulnerable):

West	North	East	South
1 ♦	Pass	Pass	Double
Pass	2 ♥	Pass	4 ♥
Pass	Pass	Pass	

East opens the nine of diamonds, declarer losing two tricks and ruffing the third. A heart lead is taken by the Ace, East returning a spade. Two rounds each of trumps and spades are taken, after which declarer has to run the club suit without loss. East would not have passed the opening bid with the Queen of clubs as well as

the Ace of hearts. The normal finesse, therefore, cannot win. The Queen will not drop, for East has followed to three rounds of each suit and cannot have more than four clubs. West must therefore have at least three clubs to the Queen.

South's Jack of clubs is led. West covers with the Queen and North's Ace wins. The nine of clubs is returned, both East and South ducking. The backward finesse thus enables declarer to make his contract.

CHAPTER XL

COMMUNICATION PLAYS

A card which wins a trick on a lead by partner or an opponent is called an *entry*. The winning of a trick opens the door, so to speak, into the hand. With the winning of a trick the player obtains the privilege of leading to the next trick—an all-important privilege when there are winning cards to be taken, or a tenace in partner's hand that demands that the lead be toward it.

The object of communication plays is to maintain entries in partnership hands and cut off entries in opponents' hands.

ENTRY-MAKING PLAYS

A card which may win a trick on a finesse is a probable entry. If the finesse wins, the means of entry is automatically included. The purpose of the finesse as an entry play, however, is entirely apart from the purpose of the finesse as a suit-establishment play.

♥ A K 10

N
W E
S

♥ Q 4 3

In the diagram shown, North-South have three sure tricks in hearts, but if three entries to the North hand are vitally necessary (in order that another suit may be led three times by North) South must play the ♥ 3 and finesse for the Jack by playing North's ♥ 10. If West has the Jack, the extra entry has been found.

Ruffing entries, likewise, while mechanically the same as any ruffing trick, have a different purpose.

♠ J 4 3
♥ 7
♦ A K Q 8 4
♣ 10 9 4 3

N
W E
S

In this example, it is South's lead. North needs to have the lead, so that two diamonds may be cashed for discards of South's club losers, and so that a finesse may be taken against the spade King. To create an entry in the North hand, South takes the heart Ace, then

leads the heart King. North ruffs, thereby obtaining entry.

♠ A Q 10 6 5 2
♥ A K Q
♦ —
♣ A K 7 5

UNBLOCKING

A suit is *blocked* when one partner holds a card which would win over the opponents' cards, and with which he wishes to win the trick; but his partner, with nothing but higher cards in that suit, has no choice but to take the lead away from him. To avoid blocking a suit, a player should resort to an unblocking play; that is, he throws a higher card than necessary in order to avoid being left in the lead.

♦ 7 6 5 2

♦ J 10 8 — N / W E / S — ♦ 9 4

♦ A K Q 3

When the North hand should lead, the ♦ 7 is allowed to win the fourth round; when South wants to keep the lead, North unblocks by throwing the ♦ 7 6 5 on the Ace, King and Queen when they are led. Now North has the ♦ 2 and South the ♦ 3, and South can cash his long diamond and yet keep the lead.

Whenever it is possible, the entries needed to establish a suit should be found in the suit itself, so that other winning cards may be kept to act as stoppers.

1. Q 3 — N / W E / S — A K 7 4 2

2. A 5 — N / W E / S — K Q J 4

3. J 9 6 — N / W E / S — A Q 10 2

In Figures 1 and 2, if one of South's honours is led first, North must win the second trick and South will need to re-enter his hand with a side entry[1] to continue establishing the suit. In these and

[1] A side entry: an entry in a suit which is not the player's strongest; used, commonly, to get the lead and immediately lead some other suit.

similar cases North's honour should be led first. In Figure 3, if North leads a low card and South finesses the Queen or ten, though the finesse may win, North must regain the lead to make another finesse. If North first leads the nine, South plays the deuce and North, if the finesse wins, remains in the lead. Now North can lead the Jack and South can throw the ten under it; and though East have the King three times guarded, North can lead to three successive finesses without losing the lead.

The trump suit offers many opportunities for unblocking.

♠ 6 5 3

♠ J 9 — N / W E / S — ♠ 10 2

♠ A K Q 8 7 4

With spades trumps, if South ruffs an opponent's lead he must be careful not to ruff with his lowest spade. It will cost him nothing to ruff with the seven or eight. Then two rounds of spades clear the suit, and North has an entry by taking South's ♠ 4 with the ♠ 6.

DUCKING

To postpone the winning of a certain or possible trick by purposely playing a low card of the suit led is called ducking. The mechanics of the ducking play ordinarily consist in conceding a trick (which must be lost sooner or later in any case) to the opponents at an early stage, conserving one or more winning cards of the suit with which to enter the hand later.

1. A K 8 6 4 3 — N / W E / S — 7 5 2

2. A 7 6 5 4 — N / W E / S — 8 3 2

3. A Q 6 5 4 — N / W E / S — 8 3

If in any example the suit is established in the usual way, by taking in the available honour-tricks and then giving up a trick or tricks to establish the long cards, North cannot later cash the long cards without a side entry. If a trick is ducked on the first

round (in Figure 1) a subsequent lead by South will enable North to run the entire suit, even if they were divided 3-1 in the opponents' hands. In Figure 2, against the expected 3-2 division, North must duck twice, taking the Ace on the third round to run the remainder of the suit.

Figure 3 is rather a desperate case, but if North has no side entry and the suit must nevertheless be brought in to make the contract, the first round is ducked entirely, and on the second round the Queen is finessed. If West had the King, and if each opponent had three cards of the suit, it will yield four tricks.

TIMING OF ENTRIES

A card which wins a trick is not an 'entry' in the full meaning of that term if the player winning the trick has no need to lead. The proper timing of entries consists in winning tricks when the lead will be of value.

1.

	♥ 9 4 3	
♥ Q	N / W E / S	♥ K 7 6 2
	♥ A J 10 8 5	

2.

	♥ A 6 5	
♥ 7	N / W E / S	♥ J 9 8 2
	♥ K Q 10 4 3	

In Figure 1 the proper play is to take two finesses, as has been shown. South expects a 3-2 division of the East-West hearts, but should guard against a 4-1 division by first leading the ♥ 3 from dummy and finessing the ten. When the time comes to take the second finesse, the ♥ 9 is led from dummy, and wins the trick, leaving dummy in the lead for a final finesse through East's King.

In Figure 2, South expects to play for a drop, but will of course finesse if West shows out on the second round. The first trick should be taken by the Queen or King, then a heart led to the Ace; if West shows out, dummy will have the lead and a finesse may be taken forthwith. If the Ace were used to win the first trick, West's singleton would not be revealed until the second round, and a side entry to dummy would be needed for the finesse.

ENTRY-KILLING PLAYS

THE HOLD-UP

The hold-up play consists in refusing to take a trick with a

stopper in the opponents' suit, until one opponent has no card of that suit in his hand.

♠ 10 6 2
♥ A 9 5
♦ 7 5
♣ A J 7 4 3

♠ K 9 3
♥ 10 8 2
♦ K Q J 8 4
♣ 6 5

N
W E
S

♠ J 8 5 4
♥ J 7 4 3
♦ 10 9 2
♣ K 9

♠ A Q 7
♥ K Q 6
♦ A 6 3
♣ Q 10 8 2

South is declarer at three no-trump, against which West opens diamonds. South allows West to win two tricks in diamonds, taking his Ace on the third round. Now he finesses for the King of clubs, losing to East; but East has no more diamonds and West has no immediate entry, so South makes his contract.

In this case the hold-up play was assured of success, because only East could get the lead. Had the Ace of clubs, instead of the King, been in the opponents' hands South could only have hoped that East would hold it.

A hold-up play may be made with two stoppers, to slow up the establishment of a suit.

♦ K 6 2

♦ Q J 10 9 5

N
W E
S

♦ 8 4

♦ A 7 3

In the example shown, West leads the ♦ Queen and South refuses to win in either hand. The next diamond lead he wins. Now, if he must relinquish the lead to East, no diamond can be led to knock out his second stopper. West, to establish and run the suit, must have two side entries.

The following are cases in which a hold-up play may be used, even at the apparent sacrifice of a trick:

♥ 7 5

♥ A 10 8 6 4 2 — N / W E / S — ♥ J 9

♥ K Q 3

♥ 7 5

♥ A 10 8 6 4 2 — N / W E / S — ♥ Q 9

♥ K J 3

When West opens the ♥ 6 and East puts up his honour, South should hold up, playing the ♥ 3, *if it is East who must be given the lead*; he does not know that East has a doubleton heart, but his only chance to shut out West's suit is to exhaust East's supply of hearts while retaining a stopper. But if West is to get the lead in the course of South's suit-establishment plays, or if either opponent is equally likely to get the lead, South may as well win the first trick. While West is in the lead South's guarded honour will be a second heart stopper.

WHEN NOT TO HOLD UP

The cases in which a hold-up play should not be made are: when the hold-up will sacrifice a sure trick in the suit led; and when the suit opened, while dangerous to declarer, is not so dangerous as another suit to which the opponents may switch.

For example:

FIGURE 1

♠ 8 7

West Leads ♠ 6 — N / W E / S — East Plays ♠ Q

♠ K 5 4

FIGURE 2

♠ 10 7

West Leads ♠ 3 — N / W E / S — East Plays ♠ Q

♠ A J 4

In Figure 1, if South does not win the first trick East may immediately lead through the ♠ King to an Ace-Jack holding in West's hand, and South will never win a trick. In Figure 2, South by winning guarantees himself two spade tricks, the Jack and ten being equals against the King; if he ducks he may get but one spade trick.

THE BATH COUP

The most effective of all hold-up plays is known as 'The Bath Coup'.

1.

♥ 7 4 2

♥ K Q 10 9 | N W E S | ♥ 8 6 5

♥ A J 3

2.

♥ A 6 5

♥ K Q 10 9 | N W E S | ♥ 7 4

♥ J 8 3

Figure 1 is the classic Bath Coup. West leads the King and South lets him hold it. Now West cannot continue hearts without leading into a tenace. To establish the Queen East must get the lead, using an entry for the purpose; and meanwhile South will have had time to find some means, if any exist, for ridding himself of the losing ♥ Jack. Figure 2 shows a situation in which a hold-up when the King is led serves the same purpose. If in either case the ♥ Ace were played on the first trick, East could lead hearts on gaining the lead and West would win two tricks.

DEFENDERS' ENTRY PLAYS

UNBLOCKING

Most of the defenders' unblocking plays do not differ from the unblocking plays of declarer.

1.

♣ 6

♣ A K Q 4 3 | N W E S | ♣ 10 9 8 2

♣ J 7 5

2.

♣ Q 6

♣ A 9 7 5 4 | N W E S | ♣ J 10 3

♣ K 8 2

In Figure 1, on West's leads of the ♣ A K Q, East must throw the ♣ 10 9 8, allowing West to win the fourth trick and remain in the lead to take the fifth. In Figure 2, dummy's Queen is put up to win West's lead of the ♣ 5. East unblocks with the Jack, so that on the next round, if East leads through South's King, South cannot cover and block the suit.

The following standard play combines the functions of a ducking play and a deceptive play:

1.

♥ 6 4

♥ J 9 7 3 2 | N W E S | ♥ A Q 5

♥ K 10 8

2.

♥ 6

♥ J 9 7 3 2 | N W E S | ♥ A Q 5

♥ K 10 8 4

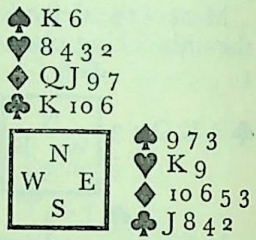
West opens the ♥ 3 against a no-trump contract, and East, despite the old 'third-hand high' rule, plays the Queen. In Figure 1, if West has no entry, the only hope of bringing in the suit is that South, fearing his King will never win a trick unless he grabs it, will fail to hold up. If East played the Ace and returned the Queen, South would hold up. In Figure 2, if East has no entry, the play of the Queen is the only means of establishing the heart suit. If South wins it, West later gets the lead and puts East in with the Ace to lead through South's 10 8. If South holds up, he can never win more than one heart trick.

This play is also proper when East's holding is A J x or A J 10.

TIMING OF ENTRIES

When, in defence against no-trump, the defenders are trying to establish a long suit, the defender who holds the shorter portion of that suit should try to get the lead with his entry cards as soon as possible; saving his partner's entries for the time when the suit is established.

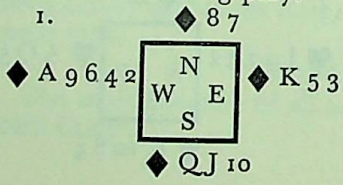
In the diagram at the right, the contract is no-trump, the North hand being dummy. West has opened the ♠ Queen and dummy's King has won it. Now a small heart is led from dummy and East should play the King! South may have another spade stopper and a heart holding such as Q J 10. Let him knock out West's ♥ Ace first, and the spade suit will be lost. If East gets the lead first and plays spades, the suit will be established while West still has the heart entry. Even if West does not hold the ♥ Ace, there are few possible cases in which East's play of the King can cost a trick.



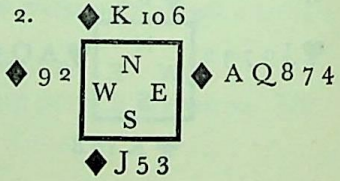
DUCKING

The defenders' ducking plays are of the utmost importance. Their purpose and their execution are identical with declarer's ducking play.

1.



2.



In Figure 1 West opens diamonds, East taking the King and returning the five. West, lacking an entry, must allow South to hold this trick so that if East has an entry he can continue diamonds when he gets in. In Figure 2, East gets the lead, diamonds not yet having been led. He simply leads a low diamond into dummy's tenace, and now if West leads diamonds later, East can run the suit. If on such a holding West opens diamonds, East, if he lacks an entry, ducks and saves his tenace.

BLOCKING PLAYS

Putting up an honour second hand is essential to success in all positions such as this one. When dummy holds any four or more cards headed by A J 10, second hand, holding an honour, must put up the honour when the suit is led.

♦ A J 10 4 3

♦ K 6 5 | N / W E / S | ♦ Q 8 2

♦ 9 7

In this case, South leads the ♦ 7 and West plays the King. If the Ace wins, there is no entry to the long suit. If North ducks East has the suit stopped again and still there is no entry.

The fact that dummy seems to hold an inviolate entry card, such as an Ace, must not cause the defending team to lose hope. The following example is an illustration of the heroism of pasteboard armies, in which a King gallantly sacrifices himself to block a suit.

♠ 10 5 2
♥ 9 6 5
♦ K Q J 7 5
♣ A 5
(DUMMY)

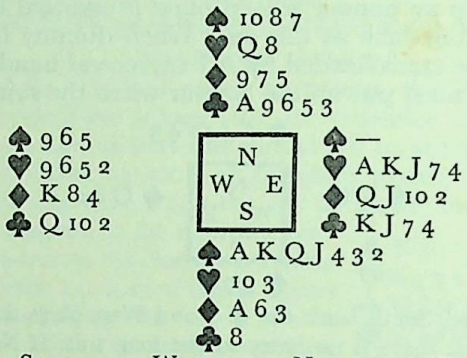
Opening Lead ♥ 2 | N / W E / S | ♠ J 9 7 ♥ A 4 3 ♦ A 6 4 ♣ K 4 3 2

Against three no-trump, East wins the first trick with the heart

Ace and lays down the King of clubs as fast as he can get it out of his hand. It is an entry-killing play which cannot fail, because dummy has only two clubs. If he takes the Ace his entry is gone; if he ducks East continues clubs. Now East holds up the diamond Ace and the suit is lost to declarer unless he has four.

HIDDEN TRUMP ENTRY

Count the number of entries needed to each hand. Make any play necessary to establish the necessary entries, even when it involves the loss of a trick if unsuccessful.



South	West	North	East
3 ♠	Pass	3 NT	Pass
4 ♦?	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

The Play: Unnecessary Finesse

West opens the deuce of hearts, East winning with the Jack and cashing the King. The Queen of diamonds is returned and South wins with the Ace. Declarer's only chance of avoiding the loss of two diamond tricks is to establish a club by ruffing. Four entries to dummy are required, of which only two or three are at first glance apparent. But an apparently unnecessary finesse provides him with the necessary extra entries.

Declarer leads a club to the Ace and ruffs a low club with the spade Jack. The spade deuce is led and when West plays low, dummy finesses the seven. Another club is ruffed with the spade Queen. The three of spades is led for a second trump finesse and another club is ruffed by the spade King. The last low spade is led

to the ten and the thirteenth club is led, giving declarer the vital diamond discard.

DESCHAPELLES COUP

The Deschapelles Coup is the sacrifice of an unsupported honour; when the opponents capture it, a card in partner's hand becomes an entry.

	♠ 8 5 4 ♥ A 7 ♦ A Q J 6 4 3 ♣ A 9	
♠ Q J 10 9 6 ♥ Q 5 2 ♦ 7 ♣ 8 6 5 2	N W E S	♠ K 3 ♥ K 6 4 3 ♦ K 10 5 2 ♣ 10 4 3
	♠ A 7 2 ♥ J 10 9 8 ♦ 9 8 ♣ K Q J 7	

North	East	South	West
1 ♦	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♦	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

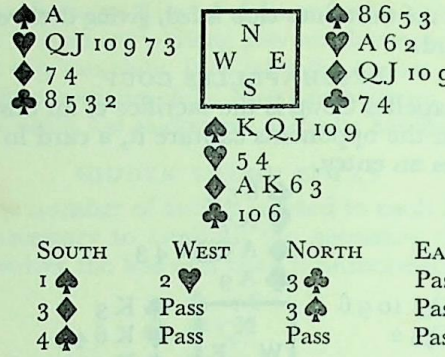
The Play: Leading a King to Slaughter

West opens the Queen of spades, East covers with the King, and South ducks. East continues the spades, South ducks again, and West wins with the nine. The Jack of spades is led, South winning with the Ace. The diamond finesse is taken and loses to East's King. Knowing that West's only possible entry is in the heart suit, East leads the King of hearts. Regardless of declarer's subsequent play, he cannot run nine tricks without permitting East to win with the diamond ten; and when this is done, South leads a heart to West's Queen. West then runs his spades.

THE SHUT-OUT PLAY

At trump contracts, dummy's suit may be killed by leading the suit until declarer has no more.

♠ 7 4 2
♥ K 8
♦ 8 5 2
♣ A K Q J 9

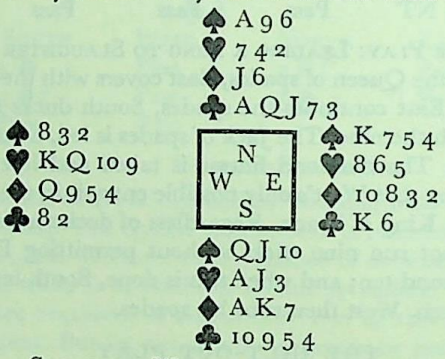


South	West	North	East
1 ♠	2 ♥	3 ♣	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

West opens the Queen of hearts and after cashing two heart tricks the defenders lead a club. The Ace of spades is knocked out and West leads a second club. At this point declarer is helpless. He is unable to obtain discards on the clubs, since East will ruff; and he cannot draw trumps and subsequently re-enter dummy.

THE BATH COUP

The Bath Coup gains time by causing the opponents to waste an entry before they can establish their suit.



South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

West leads the King of hearts and South plays low.

To avoid leading into a tenace, West shifts to a spade. Dummy ducks and East wins with the King. A heart is returned and South

plays low. West wins with the ♥ Queen and knocks out the Ace, but South can now take the club finesse without losing another heart trick.

If South had won the first heart, West could have run three tricks whenever East got the lead.

DUCKING TO SAVE AN ENTRY

The effect of the ducking play is to postpone taking a high card until it is needed as an entry.

	♠ A 8 ♥ 10 5 ♦ 10 7 ♣ A K Q 9 6 5 2	
♠ J 10 9 7 5 ♥ A 9 6 4 ♦ K 9 3 2 ♣ —	N W E S	♠ K 4 2 ♥ J 8 3 ♦ Q 8 6 ♣ J 10 7 4
	♠ Q 6 3 ♥ K Q 7 2 ♦ A J 5 4 ♣ 8 3	

South	West	North	East
Pass	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 NT	Pass	Pass	Pass

The Play: Losing the First Trick

West opens the Jack of spades, dummy playing the eight and East winning with the King. A spade is returned to dummy's Ace. Dummy must immediately lead a low club. Regardless of subsequent defence, declarer wins at least six club tricks, two spades and the Ace of diamonds.

CHAPTER XLI

THE TIME FACTOR

The Time Factor may be defined as the general principle in play that the establishment and winning of tricks is subject to a definite time limit. This time limit is determined by the number of stoppers held by one side in relation to the number of stoppers held by the other.

When a partnership has no stopper, it cannot win a trick, however many high cards and long cards it may have been able to develop previously in the play of the hand. The problems of play are therefore primarily the problems of timing, of holding on as long as necessary to stoppers which will prevent the opponents from winning the rest of the tricks.

A stopper may be a high card or a trump. A trump is a super-stopper; it will interrupt the run of any suit.

♠ K 6 4
♥ 4
♦ Q 10 9 7 5
♣ A K 9 6

N
W E
S

♠ A Q 5 3 2
♥ Q 6 5 3
♦ K J
♣ 10 8

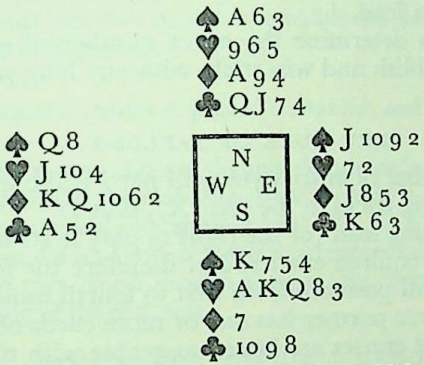
In the example shown spades are trumps, and South is declarer. West opens the King of hearts, then leads the Jack of spades. A rapid count of his resources shows South that by establishing the diamond suit he can win four diamond tricks, five spade tricks (with the expected 3-2 division) and two club tricks. He has no need to create ruffers by ruffing his losing hearts. Yet he cannot draw trumps; for dummy's small spades are his only means of stopping the heart suit. While he does not wish to ruff hearts in order to win tricks, he must be prepared to ruff hearts to stop the suit. South wins the spade lead in dummy with the King, and immediately proceeds to establish his diamond suit by straight leads. Once the diamond Ace (the opponents' last stopper) is gone, South can draw trumps and run the remaining tricks.

In the example shown, East takes the Ace of diamonds, South unblocking with the King. East now leads a spade and South wins. If West follows, the last trump is drawn and the losing hearts are

discarded on the established diamonds. If West fails to follow on the second trump lead, the trump suit must once again be abandoned in favour of diamond leads. And if East ruffs the third round of that suit, South over-ruffs and continues his policy of not drawing trumps by entering dummy with a club to continue the diamonds.

The play of most hands involves the establishment of two or more suits. In the course of establishing these suits the lead must be given up to opponents' stoppers.

Declarer's choice among various suit-establishment plays is a matter of discriminating between cases in which his establishable cards are valuable principally as tricks, and the cases in which they are more valuable as stoppers. Declarer should avoid any suit in which he will develop more tricks for his opponents than for himself.



South is declarer at four hearts, against which West opens the ♦ King. The Ace wins and three rounds of hearts clear the suit.

It is obvious that South could continue to win tricks without interruption for several plays. He could cash the Ace and King of spades. He could lead diamonds from dummy and ruff, or he could simply lead out his long hearts. But all these cards are stoppers. They must be kept to hold the opponents at bay while South establishes the club suit. By leading clubs South will force out the Ace and King, and when East and West, in the lead with these cards, play back spades or diamonds South has winning cards with which to stop them from winning tricks. One of South's losing spades can then be discarded on the last club.

TIME VALUATION OF A LONG SUIT

Timing in suit establishment consists of a count of the tricks it is necessary to lose to opponents because they hold stoppers in the suit, and the count of the entries required to regain the lead each time.

The club suit held by West in the following diagram will not win a trick:

♠ 8 4 2 ♥ 10 5 ♦ 9 3 ♣ K Q J 10 9 8	N W E S	♠ A 7 5 3 ♥ A 8 4 3 ♦ 10 7 6 5 ♣ 6

West's opening lead is the club King, establishing the club suit. But there the matter ends, for West cannot regain the lead to make use of his clubs: and East, with his two Aces, has no club to lead.

In order to determine the exact number of entries required to establish and win tricks with any long suit, count as follows:

THE RULE OF X-PLUS-1

1. The number of entries you will need is the number of estimated losing tricks in the suit (X), plus 1.

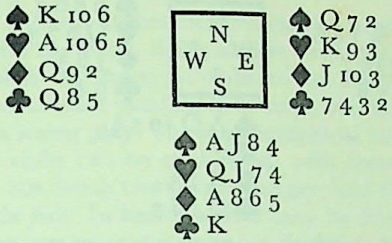
2. The opening lead (or the right to play first) is counted as one of the required entries, and therefore the formula is applicable to all positions from first to fourth hand.

In cases where partner has one or more cards of the long suit to lead, his entries are interchangeable with the entries in the leader's own hand. When partner has no card of the long suit, or when his cards can be removed by a hold-up play, the entries must be in the leader's hand.

An entry, in this case, must usually also be a stopper, or partner must have a stopper with which to get the lead, and the leader an entry with which his partner can put him in.

ILLUSTRATING X-PLUS-1

♠ 9 5 3
♥ 8 2
♦ K 7 4
♣ A J 10 9 6



The contract is no-trump, with South the declarer. West opens the ♥ 5, East winning with the King; East then leads the ♥ 9, and South covers with the Jack, West ducking. South, in the lead with the ♥ Jack, applies time valuation to his strongest suit, clubs.

Using the Rule of Five Steps, South determines that the ♣ Queen will probably not fall on leads of the King and Ace. One trick must therefore be lost to establish the club suit. Applying the Rule of X-plus-1:

X equals 1.

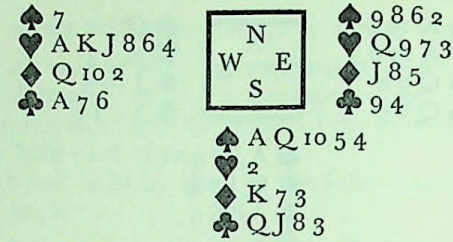
1 plus 1 equal 2 entries required to establish and cash the club suit.

To create a second entry to dummy, South leads the club King and overtakes with the club Ace. Now the suit is established by leading the Jack and letting West win with the Queen. Finally, South regains the lead with a *stopper* in whatever suit West chooses to lead, and puts North in with his *entry*, the diamond King, to utilize the rest of the club suit.

TIME VALUATION OF A HAND

Before deciding which suit or suits to establish, declarer counts the number of times he must lose the lead to an opposing stopper. Then he counts the winners they can establish and win with this number of entries.

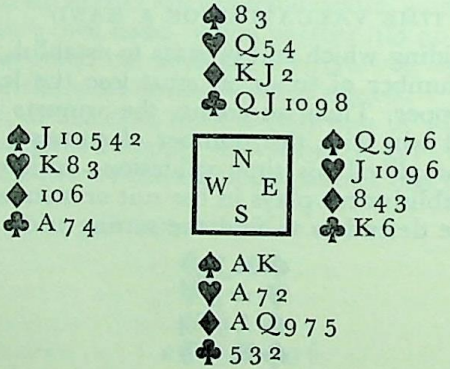
Having completed his time valuation, declarer should make his establishment plays in the suit or suits which will not allow the defenders to find the setting tricks.



South is declarer at four spades; West wins the first trick with the heart King and then leads the heart Ace. South, who could stop the suit by ruffing, sees that he must later lose a trick to establish clubs. After losing that trick, he must be careful still to have a heart stopper. His only available heart stoppers are his trumps. If he can draw the opponents' trumps in three rounds, he will have that stopper; if it requires four rounds, he must either fail to draw trumps, leaving an opponent the means of stopping the club suit; or use up his own last trump, giving up his means of stopping the heart suit.

To increase his stopping power, South saves all five of his trumps, discarding a diamond on the second round of hearts. Now dummy's trump suit serves to stop hearts, preventing a continuation of that suit. Either the defenders must set up South's clubs for him, or must give him the lead in diamonds, where he is adequately protected. He can draw trumps, establish clubs, and still have a trump to stop the hearts.

At no-trump contracts time valuation is similar:



South is declarer at three no-trump. West opens a spade, South winning with the King. Being able to count eight winners, South must establish one more. In clubs he can establish it by straight leads, and entries are plentiful to dummy, but time valuation shows this to be a losing play. The opponents must be given two entries before the clubs can be established; with these entries they can first knock out South's last spade stopper, and then run the established spade suit. In hearts a trick may be found by an indirect finesse. The success of this finesse is doubtful, but the extra trick, if the heart suit will produce it, can be made with the loss of only one entry. To balance this losing trick, South has a remaining spade stopper. Time valuation having shown him the proper point of attack, he leads a low heart toward the Queen.

He does not first lay down the heart Ace, though this play was recommended in Chapter XXXVIII as protection against loss to an unguarded King. In this case, the heart Ace is South's only sure heart stopper, and he must keep it until forced to use it, or until by playing it he will win a trick which makes his contract.

TIME VALUATION OF RUFFERS

The ruffer is a combined unit, consisting of two parts—the losing card to be ruffed and the worthless trump. To determine the number of ruffers you can win, count the number of worthless trumps, then count the number of losing cards that can be ruffed. The smaller number is the number of ruffers.

The hand which must lead the losing cards needs exactly as many entries as the number of available ruffers. The entries must be available *after* the void is created.

The opponents' best defence against a ruffing game is to lead trumps every time they get the lead. Therefore, assume that with every entry they have they will lead a trump. Count the number of losing leads necessary to establish the void *and* to develop the necessary entries. Deduct this number from the number of available trumps before counting the expected ruffers.

One opponent, however, may not have a trump to lead when he gets the lead; and, in certain circumstances, one or both may be unable to lead a trump without leading into a tenace.

♠ K 10 6

♠ Q 5 4 | N W E S | ♠ J 7

♠ A 9 8 3 2

If either opponent leads spades he sacrifices the combined stopper.

CHAPTER XLII

DECLARER'S PLANNING AND PLAY

The paramount objective of declarer's play is to make the tricks required by the contract, be it a part-score, a game, or a slam. No contract should be given up as hopelessly lost unless all possibilities—including end-plays and psychic plays[1]—have been eliminated.

When it is evident that the contract cannot be made, the object of play will be to minimize the possible loss. Here the technique of play will be the same, except that declarer will have no definite number of tricks to strive for, but will play to win as many tricks as he can *with safety*.

The safety factor demands that certain contracts be abandoned because, though there be some outside chance of its being made, the loss if that chance fails will be too great to risk. In the typical situation declarer has three choices:

To make his contract if a gamble is successful;

To be set several tricks if the gamble fails;

To be set one trick by playing safe.

In making his choice declarer must be guided by the chances for and against the success of the gambling play, and the points he can gain or lose, always keeping in mind the invisible score—the points which do not show immediately on the score-sheet (Chapter XXIX).

Let us assume, for instance, that declarer is playing a four-spade contract, not vulnerable, but doubled. In dummy he has A Q of a plain suit, and does not know the whereabouts of the King. The opponents have an established suit in which declarer has no stopper, not even a trump. If declarer finesses and the finesse wins, he makes his contract. If the finesse loses, the long suit will be run against him and he will be down four tricks.

If he refuses the finesse he is surely set one—100.

If he finesses and wins he makes 240 for tricks; 300 for the

[1] A psychic play is one whose object is to mislead the opponents and cause one or both of them to make a mistake.

invisible value of the game; and he *saves* 100 that he would have lost by refusing the finesse. Total, 640.

If he finesses and loses he loses 700.

Here his possible gain is 640, his possible loss 700, on an exactly even bet. Having more to lose than to gain, he should play safe, taking the one-trick set. But if the most he could be set, even if the finesse lost, were three tricks, 500 points, he should gamble the extra loss against the chance of making his contract, and take the finesse.

PLAYING FOR OVERTRICKS

To make extra tricks should be the object of play only when the chance of losing the contract is very remote. I purposely avoid the usual injunction '*Never* risk the contract for overtricks'. An overtrick is worth, on the average, at least 25 points. Only when the odds are overwhelmingly in favour of a certain line of play may the game be risked for an overtrick.

ADVANCE PLANNING

The indispensable factor in the correct play of the hand is planning.

The first step is to take stock of the available forces by counting the number of winners and losers in the combined hands. The united hands will, as a rule, contain a number of sure winners, a number of unavoidable losers, and a number of possible losers, some of which can be turned into winners by skilful play.

As a general rule, the losers should be counted at trump bids and the winners at no-trump bids, but there are some important exceptions. The winners should be counted at trump bids:

1. With pure cross-ruffs, when the trumps in the two hands are to be made separately by ruffing.

2. With powerful hands, containing a solid or nearly solid trump suit and a solid or nearly solid side suit.

3. With very weak hands, when the total resources consist of a few Aces and Kings, and one or two possible ruffs. Here, to count nine losers instead of four or five winners would be very inefficient.

At no-trump contracts the winners are always counted,

but especially at slam contracts the declarer at no-trump should check his count by counting the losers.

Declarer should not lose sight of the fact that a possible winner may not get a chance to win a trick.

♠ 10 8 7 6
♥ 5
♦ K Q 7
♣ K Q J 9 8

N
W E
S

♠ K Q J 9 5
♥ A 4 3 2
♦ J 10
♣ 10 7

Here is shown a hand in which South can establish four spade tricks, two diamond tricks and four club tricks by straight leads. He can ruff two or three hearts in dummy. The total count of winners is 13 or 14. Yet three tricks must be lost to Aces, so declarer can win at most 10 tricks. Here the value of checking the losers against the winners, both by an actual count of opposing stoppers and by time valuation, is apparent.

The Culbertson Rule of No-trump Planning is divided into three reviews. Each review is subdivided into steps which portray the subconscious thought process of a nearly perfect player.

THE FIRST REVIEW

The first review is an estimate of the resources of the hand —the tricks that can be won with high cards and that can to developed from high or low cards by suit-establishment plays.

STEP 1. Study the card led—it probably has some conventional meaning (Chapter XLV) which will guide you in estimating the chances for success of any suit-establishment play in that suit.

STEP 2. Starting with the suit led, count the immediate winners (cards which will win tricks without any preliminary suit-establishment plays, and without giving up the lead) in all four suits. In each suit, count on the basis of the combined length and strength of your and dummy's hands. Then deduct the number of immediate winners from the total number of tricks you need to make the contract, and you will know how many additional winners you must establish.

STEP 3. Study all four suits to determine how many additional winners may be established in each. In the first count, consider only honour-winners establishable by straight leads, and long cards which can be made if the

opponents' cards are divided in the most probable (not necessarily the most favourable) way. *Then* consider a finesse, or a play for a drop, or long-suit establishment, which may succeed if the position or division of the outstanding cards is favourable.

THE SECOND REVIEW

The second review is a revaluation of the establishable winners by time valuation and a count of entries.

STEP 4. Take the suit in which you can establish the greatest number of winners. How many times must you lose the lead to establish this suit? How many winners can the opponents establish and win with this number of leads? In counting the opponents' potential winners, include any Aces or other immediate winners which *they* hold, and which they can take whenever they are ready and have the lead.

If time valuation shows that the best suit you have cannot be established without losing the lead too many times, consider another suit from the standpoint of time valuation. Another suit may produce fewer eventual winners, but may be establishable in *less time*.

STEP 5. Usually one opponent is more 'dangerous' than the other—he may hold established or establishable trick-winners, or he may be in position to lead through a tenace. Look for an entry-killing play to keep that opponent out of the lead as much as possible.

STEP 6. Count the entries you need for each projected suit-establishment play. Then look for possible entries, and if they are not readily available plan entry-making or entry-saving plays.

But do not give up a valuable stopper, by using it as an entry, unless it is absolutely necessary.

THE THIRD REVIEW

The object of the third review is to plumb the depths of the hand to safeguard a sure contract or to find hidden means of making a doubtful one.

STEP 7. Safety Plays. With the contract apparently assured, look for ways to protect the counted winners against abnormally bad breaks. (Chapter XLIV.)

STEP 8. End-plays. Especially when the contract is doubt-

ful, but sometimes only to make an overtrick, look for an end-play situation and try to play the hand so as to retain the chance of making it. (Chapter XLIII.)

STEP 9. Psychological plays. When all other resources fail, look for a sheer bluff play or stratagem which may lead the defenders to make a mistake and give you one or more tricks.

Do not play from dummy to the first trick until you have completed the three reviews.

ILLUSTRATING THE THREE REVIEWS

No matter how cut-and-dried even the play to the first trick may seem, it is worth while to pause and plan the future play of the hand. When declarer cannot hope to win the first trick, his three reviews of the hand may lead him to try a false-card which will work. At the right is shown a hand which South plays at three no-trump. West's opening lead is the ♦ 6. South, before playing to the first trick, applies the steps of planning. The results are as follows:

	♠ J 9 5 ♥ J 5 2 ♦ Q 3 ♣ A J 6 4 3	
West Leads ♦ 6	N W E S	
	♠ A 10 3 ♥ A Q 10 4 ♦ K 8 4 ♣ K 10 2	

FIRST REVIEW

STEP 1. The card led is probably from a long suit of five or six cards. Possibly it has only four cards.

STEP 2. South can immediately win one trick in diamonds, two in clubs, one in spades and one in hearts. He needs nine for his contract. 9 — 5 leaves 4 tricks he must find.

STEP 3. Assuming a 3-2 division but a losing finesse for the Queen, the club suit will produce two additional winners; the heart suit at least two, even if the finesse fails; the spade suit one with a double finesse. If the heart finesse wins, another finesse may be taken against the King, adding at least two tricks without losing the lead. If the club finesse wins and the suit breaks, the suit will develop five winners, three more than the counted immediate winners in that suit. Finally, if West has the Ace of diamonds, dummy's Queen will win the first trick, leaving South the guarded King to stop the suit provided East never gets the lead.

THE SECOND REVIEW

South now knows that he must establish four winners by various sorts of suit-establishment plays; that the club suit will produce a

maximum of three, more than any other suit is likely to produce. He now applies time valuation.

STEP 4. In establishing the club suit, no more than one trick need be lost. If South succeeds in stopping the diamond suit and still retaining a diamond stopper, the opponents cannot do more than take their diamond Ace when they get the lead in clubs; but if South proves to have only one diamond stopper, his only hope is to shut out the player holding the long diamond suit.

At most, three extra tricks can be found in clubs. South will need another trick. If he seeks it in hearts, and the finesse works, the lead need not be lost; if the finesse fails, the opponents will get the lead. However, the spade finesse cannot fail to give up the lead, and can produce at most one additional trick; therefore South must face the need for taking the heart finesse.

STEP 5. If South can surely keep East out of the lead, he should put up the Queen of diamonds on the first trick, for if it holds the trick South's King will be a sure second stopper. But if East must be given the lead, South should play low from both dummy and his own hand until forced to win a diamond trick; by using the hold-up play he may exhaust East's supply.

Checking up on the club suit, South finds that he can make an entry-killing play against either opponent at will. But in hearts, if he loses a trick, it can be only to West.

South therefore determines to play dummy's diamond Queen hoping that to establish their suit the defenders must at least give him a second diamond trick.

STEP 6. If South is to finesse a club into West's hand, he must lead from the dummy, which requires an entry. The diamond Queen, assuming it wins the first trick, provides that entry.

A lost finesse limits the club suit to four winners, meaning that two finesses will be needed in hearts. Where are the other two entries? The club Ace is one of them. The other is supplied by leading the ♥ Jack for the first finesse.

If the diamond Queen does not win the first trick (if East has the Ace and plays it) then South's plan will be a hold-up play with the King of diamonds, and a club finesse through West.

THE THIRD REVIEW

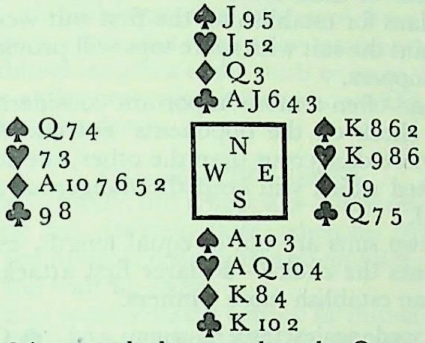
South has now sketched out his plan of play on an *if* basis, his plan depending upon whether or not the diamond Queen wins the first trick.

STEP 7. There is no available Safety Play.

STEP 8. End-plays (covered in Chapter XLIII) may possibly be developed, but it is too soon to judge.

STEP 9. No specific plan for deceiving the opponents need be formed on this hand.

South now plays the Queen of diamonds from the dummy, the entire plan detailed above having consumed about ten seconds. The complete deal:



The ♦ 6 is opened, dummy plays the Queen, East unblocks with the Jack and South plays the four. The ♣ 3 is led from dummy, East playing the five, South the ten and West the eight. After the clubs are run, the Jack of hearts is led and South makes three heart tricks, easily sufficient for his contract.

DECLARER'S PLAY AT NO-TRUMP

The whole body of no-trump play is built around the long suit or suits in the combined hands. From the standpoint of declarer's play, a long suit is not a four-card length in his own hand but a length of at least seven cards in the combined hands. A 5-1 or 6-0 division may, it is true, develop long cards, but unless the long suit is plentifully equipped with tops the time factor usually prevents the suit's establishment. With a suit divided 4-2 or 3-3 in the partnership hands no long card is possible and to lead the suit will establish long cards for the opponents instead of for declarer. With suits divided 4-3, 5-2, 5-3 (or better) in the hands of declarer and dummy the problem of play is usually a matter of choosing among several such suits.

CHOICE OF SUITS

When two long suits are available, and only one is needed to make the contract, the choice is determined, as in most Bridge problems, by the time factor. As a rule it will be found preferable to establish the suit in which the opponents can surely win tricks with their stoppers, whether you lead the suit yourself or not. The other suit, which contains a greater number of immediate winners, can be attempted later if the plans for establishing the first suit went wrong; and at this point the suit with more tops will provide its own entries and stoppers.

A second and often a more important consideration is to keep a close check on the opponents' entries. When one opponent is more dangerous than the other, the suit should first be attacked which will keep the dangerous adversary out of the lead.

When the two suits are not of equal length, expediency often determines the choice—declarer first attacks the suit in which he can establish more winners.

West opens a spade against three no-trump, and declarer wins the trick by putting up dummy's Queen. His count of winners shows him that he needs two additional winners; his time valuation shows him that he can afford to give up the lead only once. The only chance of developing two winners with one loss of *tempo* is to play for a 3-3 diamond break. The odds favour a 3-2 club break and are against the diamond break, but the danger that the defenders can establish and cash the setting tricks with two entries is too great. South therefore plays the King, Ace and a small diamond.

♠ Q 6
♥ 7 2
♦ A 8 7 5 4
♣ K 7 6 3

N
W E
S

♠ A 8 5
♥ A J 10 5
♦ K 3
♣ A 9 5 2

When time does not press and either of two suits will produce the needed winners, choose the one which is more likely to break favourably. The table of probabilities on page 435 is an invaluable guide in such choices.

When the contract depends upon trying to establish a long card or finessing for a missing honour in another suit:

1. If the finesse, if successful, does not involve the loss of a trick (that is, with A Q or another tenace which has been

promoted to equivalent rank) *try for the long card first.* If you cannot establish the long card you can always try the finesse later.

2. If the finesse involves the loss of the lead whether successful or not (that is, with K J 10 and x x x, etc.) follow the line of play which has mathematically a better chance of success. The odds on a single finesse are 50-50. They favour a double finesse (A J 10 and x x x) by 3 to 1. The odds are *against* the establishment of a long card from a combined length of seven cards, but favour the establishment of a suit whose combined length is eight cards or more. The bidding and previous play may give information which alters these percentages up or down.

THE WAITING GAME

Sometimes—rarely, but it happens—declarer has no establishable long suit. In such cases, when his strength in the other suits lies in broken strength and no solid sequences, he must play the waiting game.

The waiting game consists simply in throwing the opponents into the lead as often as possible and letting them lead to one of the tenaces.

TRUMP PLANNING

With the play of trump bids the declarer ascends into a higher and far more complex technique. The trump suit introduces into the play a third kind of trick—the ruffer—and a second kind of stopper and entry, the trump suit.

The Rule of Trump Planning, like the no-trump rule, is divided into three reviews.

THE FIRST REVIEW

STEP 1. Starting with the suit led, count the number of tricks you must lose immediately—tricks the opponents can win without knocking out one of your stoppers.

STEP 2. Count the possible losers in combined hands—losing cards in suits which you have stopped temporarily, or immediate losers which the opponents cannot take until they get the lead. Add your sure and possible losers, and compare the total with the number of tricks you can afford to lose.

STEP 3. Look for a suit in your hand or dummy in which long cards or high cards can be established; if the other hand is short in this suit, it can discard one or more losers.

You will not gain by discarding a loser from dummy on a *long card* unless dummy has more trumps than are needed to draw the opponents' trumps.

But you can gain by discarding one or more losers from dummy on established high cards in your hand, if it can be done while dummy still has trumps which can be turned into ruffers.

STEP 4. Look for a short suit in dummy, and for worthless trumps; apply time valuation (page 459) and decide whether or not you can make ruffers.

STEP 5. Consider a finesse or a play for a drop to establish a card *which you cannot discard or ruff.*

THE SECOND REVIEW

The first review has allowed you to take stock of your resources. The second review considers these resources from the standpoints of time, entries and probable holdings of opponents.

STEP 6. Apply time valuation to every proposed plan of play. Count the number of times the opponents can get the lead and the tricks they can win when they have the lead.

If you plan to discard losers on high cards, remember that the high cards must be established and the discards taken before the opponents can establish and win their own tricks. If the opponents establish their tricks on the opening lead, you must be able to take your discards without losing the lead. If you still have one stopper in the opponents' suit, you must be able to establish your high cards for discards with only one loss of the lead.

If you plan to discard losers on established long cards, carefully time-value the trump suit. You must have enough trumps to stop the opponents while you are establishing your long cards, and you must generally be able to draw trumps before using the long suit.

If you plan to make use of ruffers, remember that the opponents will probably lead trumps every time they have the lead. Then proceed to Step 7.

STEP 7. Almost every suit-establishment play requires that the lead come from a certain hand. To discard a loser on an established card in the other hand, you must put the lead in the other hand. To lead losing cards and ruff them, you must have entries to the hand which holds the losing cards. Count the entries required for every proposed line of play, and look for plays to create more entries.

Above all things, look ahead in your suit establishment. Do not go through the waste effort of establishing a long suit for later use unless you carefully save an entry until such time as the long suit is established.

THE THIRD REVIEW

STEP 8. With the contract assured, look for a Safety Play to protect against bad breaks.

STEP 9. Especially if there is doubt as to making the contract, look for an end-play.

STEP 10. When all other resources fail, look for some means of bluffing the opponents into making a mistake.

Then play from dummy to the first trick.

ILLUSTRATING THE THREE REVIEWS

The hands shown are to be played by South at a contract of four spades. West's opening lead is the Queen of diamonds. After a brief glance at the lead, South plans his play:

♠ Q 6 5 2
♥ K J 8 5
♦ 7 5 3
♣ K 3

N
W E
S

♠ A J 8 3
♥ A Q
♦ K 8 2
♣ Q 10 7 5

FIRST REVIEW

STEP 1. There is an immediate loser in diamonds, if the opponents take their Ace, and an immediate club loser whenever they wish to take the Ace.

STEP 2. A second loser is evident in diamonds, but need not be lost until the opponents have knocked out the King. A spade trick must probably be lost, for South cannot clear the suit by finessing unless East has a doubleton King. If the club Ace kills dummy's King, the Queen will win the second round, but South will have remaining two clubs which will be losers unless they can be ruffed, or unless the Jack drops or is finessable. There is no loser in hearts.

STEP 3. There is no long suit in the combined hands, except the trump suit. The heart suit, however, can win four tricks with high

cards. Since South has only two hearts, there is a possibility of discarding two losers.

STEP 4. South can use two of dummy's small trumps to ruff his losing clubs, and his own trump suit will be long enough, in normal circumstances, to draw trumps and to retain one long trump to act as a stopper. However (applying the Rule of Five Steps) one opponent has only three clubs, and may be able to over-ruff the dummy on the fourth round.

STEP 5. The spade finesse may be attempted, but is unlikely to gain a trick, since the opponents will probably exact one spade trick regardless of who holds the King.

If South decides that he probably cannot ruff out both clubs, he can try a finesse against the Jack of clubs; if the club King wins the first trick in that suit, he can take a free finesse, without risking the loss of an extra trick.

THE SECOND REVIEW

Since nothing can be done about the first diamond trick, a small diamond is played from dummy. East takes the Ace and returns the ♦ 9. South wins with the King.

STEP 6. The opponents now have one trick, and hold an established diamond which South cannot stop—if they get the lead. Having counted that he must lose tricks in spades and clubs, South cannot afford to lose a second diamond trick. Therefore, he cannot give up the lead, to establish his club ruffs, or risk giving up the lead by finessing in spades, until he has discarded his diamond loser. He must at once lead three rounds of hearts and throw off the diamond. *But*—

STEP 7. If South cashes his ♥ A Q, how will he get to dummy? No entry can be established without losing the lead, whereupon the opponents will take a diamond trick. Therefore, South must create a quick entry to dummy by taking the heart Ace and overtaking the Queen with dummy's King. This he does. Now he leads the Jack and gets rid of his diamond.

Now the problem of entries remains. South would like to lead a club from his hand toward the King, but dummy is in the lead. South cannot get the lead except by ruffing a diamond, which would sacrifice a trump valuable as a stopper, or by leading a trump.

If South leads a trump and takes the Ace, it is a sure entry; but

then, when the opponents get in with the club Ace they may lead the King and a small trump, leaving dummy with only one trump to ruff clubs.

Another entry consideration is the avoidance principle. South does not want East to lead, for East may have the last outstanding heart. On a heart lead South would ruff, but West might over-ruff.

The best chance of shutting East out, attempting to create an entry, and taking the best chance of avoiding a spade loser is to lead a small spade from dummy and finesse. If the finesse wins, South will clear the club suit and ruff two clubs, resigning himself to the loss of one, but only one, spade trick. If the spade finesse loses, and West returns a trump to shut off club ruffs, South can win the trick and dummy will have still two trumps to ruff clubs, with the option of the club finesse. If West leads a diamond, South's small trump stops the suit.

THE THIRD REVIEW

STEP 8. The contract cannot be made without good breaks, so no Safety Play is available.

STEP 9. No end-play is likely to develop, but South's plan of play cannot be altered on a bare hope in any case.

STEP 10. There seems to be no available opportunity to false-card or make any other deceptive play.

The complete deal, and South's play of it, follow:

	♠ Q 6 5 2 ♥ K J 8 5 ♦ 7 5 3 ♣ K 3	
♠ K 7 ♥ 9 7 6 2 ♦ Q J 10 6 ♣ 9 8 2	N W E S	♠ 10 9 4 ♥ 10 4 3 ♦ A 9 4 ♣ A J 6 4
	♠ A J 8 3 ♥ A Q ♦ K 8 2 ♣ Q 10 7 5	

West opened the Queen of diamonds. East took the Ace and returned the nine, South winning. South led the Ace of hearts, then the Queen. Dummy took the heart King and led the Jack, South discarding a diamond.

Dummy led the ♠ 2, East played the four and South the Jack. West won with the ♠ King and returned the ♠ 7. South won with the Ace and led a club, the ♣ King falling to East's Ace. East returned the ten of spades, dummy's Queen winning.

Dummy led the club three, and East played the four. The Rule of Five Steps convincing him that the Jack was unlikely to fall on the next round, South finessed the club ten. The ♣ Queen and the remaining spades won the last tricks.

TRUMP MANAGEMENT

A troublesome problem for all players is 'When shall I lead trumps? When shall I postpone leading trumps?'

During the play, a trump in either hand may be 'busy'—it may be needed, now or later, as a stopper, entry, guard or ruffer.

Other trump cards will be idle; they will have no function, now or later, as stoppers, entries, guards or ruffers.

Do not draw out your busy trumps! If the time comes when your suit-establishment plays are completed, and the opponents' strong suits are no longer dangerous, then trumps can be led.

Draw out immediately all your idle trumps! They are doing you no good, and they will eliminate from the opponents' hands trump cards which may serve them as added stoppers, entries or winners.

In the example shown, the game is made by saving a 'busy' trump. South plays four spades, and West leads the diamond Ace, following it with the Queen, which South trumps. South finds that he has more than enough trumps to stop the diamond suit, so that his trumps are not busy. North's two small trumps are not busy, as they are not needed as stoppers, entries or guards.

♠ Q 7 5
♥ 8 6 3
♦ 7 4
♣ K Q J 6 2

N
W E
S

♠ A K 9 6 3 2
♥ A Q 5
♦ 3
♣ 10 5 4

South lays down the Ace and King of spades. One opponent shows out, meaning that the other opponent still has a trump. There is danger of a club ruff, but South cannot lead another trump—dummy's Queen is busy, for it is needed as an entry to the club suit.

South proceeds to lead clubs and establish the suit by driving

out the Ace. The opponent who holds the third trump may get a ruff, it is true; but then dummy gets the lead with the spade Queen and South's two hearts are discarded on the remaining clubs. Without entry to the club suit, South would have had to try the heart finesse and be defeated if it failed.

When the opponents, after the trump suit has been led, have remaining one or more high trumps, declarer should be guided as follows:

If his own lower trumps are not busy, he should lead them and allow the opponents to take their master trump at once.

If his lower trumps are busy, he should lead other suits and if possible force out the opponents' master trump by letting them ruff his winning cards in other suits.

THE CROSS-RUFF

The important considerations of the ruffing game are:

1. Count the tricks that can be won by ruffs and high cards in other suits, and be sure they are enough.

2. Count the entries needed in both hands, and establish the entries, as often as possible, *first*. Usually the ruffs in each hand will provide entries.

3. *Cash all idle top cards in trump or plain suits*, before starting the ruffing process. This is important, yet must be followed intelligently. Do not cash a top trump if it frees a master trump for the opponents, with which they can get the lead and shorten your trump length in both hands.

The reason for cashing idle cards—those not needed as entries—in side suits is simple: while you are ruffing plain suits, the opponents may discard on the plain suits their losers in other plain suits. When later you try to cash your top cards, the opponents will be void and can ruff. However, this rule must also be followed cautiously; be *sure* of your entries before cashing top cards in plain suits.

The most effective cross-ruff is one in which all ruffs are made with high trumps. No over-ruff is possible, and each winning ruff is its own entry.

♠ J 10 9 6
♥ A
♦ 10 8 7 4 2
♣ A K 4

♠ 7 ♥ Q 9 6 ♦ A K Q 9 3 ♣ Q J 6 2	N W E S	♠ 8 4 3 2 ♥ K 10 8 7 5 ♦ J 6 ♣ 9 5
	♠ A K Q 5 ♥ J 4 3 2 ♦ 5 ♣ 10 8 7 3	

South plays four spades; West opens the diamond King and, seeing the dangerous cross-ruff impending, switches to the spade. South counts his tricks: he will win this spade trick, can win two club tricks and one heart, and can ruff three times in each hand, total six: ten tricks. He needs three entries to each hand for the three ruffing leads, and will procure these entries by ruffing. He does not need the top clubs as entries or stoppers. He cashes the top clubs and the heart Ace, then leads diamonds and hearts back and forth, ruffing as he goes.

If South neglected to cash both clubs at once, East would discard a club on the third round of diamonds. South could then never get more than one club trick.

DUMMY REVERSAL

As a rule ruffing with the long trump suit does not gain a trick, and should be avoided except when the ruffing trick provides an entry or a stopper, or serves to ruff out a long suit. An exception exists, however:

	♥ A J 3	
♥ 10 5 2	N W E S	♥ 9 6
	♥ K Q 8 7 4	

When no ruffs are possible in the North, or dummy, hand, South's maximum number of heart winners would seem to be five, the length of his suit.

If, however, South is short in a suit which North can lead, and if South can ruff three leads of this suit, North's hearts will win three tricks and can even draw the opposing trumps. The total tricks will then be three in each hand, a total of six.

This type of play will be overlooked consistently by those

who consider the dummy only an adjunct to declarer's hand, and do not realize that the hands, in a practical sense, are interchangeable.

CARD READING

There are two objects in card reading:

1. To determine the position of the missing key-cards of each suit.

2. To determine distribution of the outstanding cards of each suit.

Very often it is possible to gauge precisely the cards an opponent holds in a suit he has bid. Of course, it does not necessarily follow that because a player has bid spades he must hold the spade Ace, but it is very likely that he does rather than a sketchy suit such as Q x x x x. A come-on signal will likewise serve to place a high card or cards in the hand of the signalling player unless, of course, declarer must suspect that his intention is deceit rather than the giving of information to his partner. A suit may be placed not only from the bidding but from the stronger influence of leads which show length (page 509) or the exact information as to the original suit holdings which is available when any player shows out. The method of placing a single suit is:

1. Assume the probable number of cards that a player must have had to bid; or to make a certain lead; or take the exact number of cards he was shown to have had originally when he fails to follow suit.

2. Add that number to the combined holding of your hand and dummy, and subtract the total from thirteen. The remainder is the length of that suit in the other opponent's hand.

The rules for counting out the distribution of an entire hand are very similar to the rules for suit placing. The repeated operation of the latter rule finally yields an accurate count on the entire missing twenty-six cards rather than on one-fourth of them. In both hand and suit placing a player will usually find it easier to reconstruct the unknown hands on the basis of their original thirteen-card holdings rather than by deducting cards already played. The steps in hand placing are:

1. From any information, sure or probable, at your disposal, reconstruct as many suits in one opponent's hand as possible.

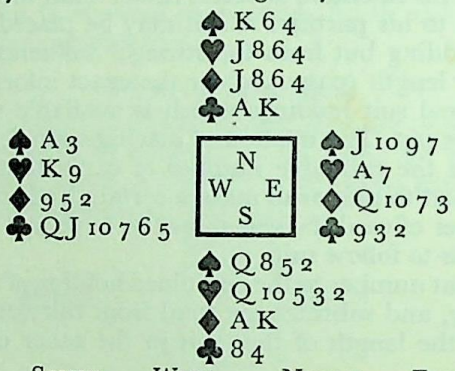
2. Add each separate suit holding to the total in your hand and dummy, and by subtracting from thirteen place the remaining cards of each suit in the other opponent's hand.

3. When three suits can be placed, their total subtracted from thirteen gives the length of the fourth suit in an opponent's hand, after which Step 2 will give the number of that fourth suit in the other opponent's hand.

4. When only one or two suits can be placed, and there is no available information on the other suits, assume that they are divided as evenly as possible.

DECLARER'S PLAY

When the previous play has shown that a finesse, if attempted, will lose, declarer may resort to a ducking play commonly known as the 'obligatory finesse'.



South	West	North	East
1 ♥	2 ♣	3 ♥	Pass
4 ♥	Pass	Pass	Pass

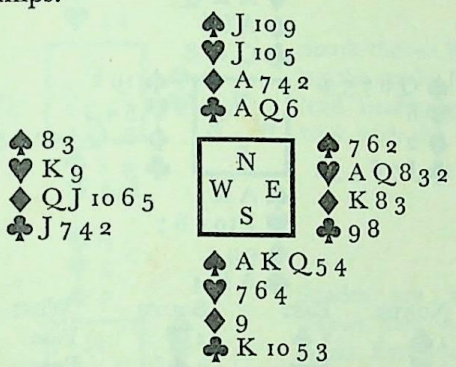
The Play: Obligatory Finesse

West opens the club Queen, dummy winning. Dummy leads a trump, East winning the Ace and playing another club. Dummy wins and leads another trump, which West wins. Now West leads a diamond. South takes the diamond King and leads a spade. West plays low and dummy's King is put up, winning the trick.

A spade is led back from dummy and through East plays the Jack, South ducks. East's failure to win the first spade trick marks West with the spade Ace. South could not gain by playing the spade Queen, for it would surely be captured. When South ducks, West must play the Ace nevertheless, establishing South's Queen. South loses only two heart tricks and the Ace of spades, making four hearts.

DECLARER'S PLAY OF TRUMP BIDS

The declarer must realize that the dummy hand is not merely an adjunct to his own hand and that the dummy's short trump suit may sometimes be used to draw the opponents' trumps.



South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 NT	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

The Play: Dummy Reversal

West opens the diamond Queen, dummy's Ace winning. If South draws trumps at once he can win five spade tricks, one diamond and three clubs. His tenth trick will materialize only if the clubs break 3-3. South cannot ruff a fourth club in dummy because East would ruff one of his high clubs on the third round. South can, however, develop the necessary ten tricks by ruffing three diamonds in his own hand and then drawing trumps with dummy's ♠ J 10 9. Therefore, after winning the first diamond in dummy South immediately ruffs a diamond. He takes two rounds

of spades, ending in dummy, and ruffs another diamond with his spade King. He re-enters dummy with the club Queen and ruffs the last diamond with his last spade. Now the dummy gets the lead again with the club Ace, draws the last trump with the spade Jack, and leaves South with the club King to win the tenth trick.

DECLARER'S PLAY

CARD READING

From leads, plays and especially from discards (when one opponent shows out) estimate the distribution of each suit in the opponents' hands.

	♠ J 9 6 4 ♥ A K Q ♦ A 8 6 ♣ Q 10 8	
♠ Q 8 7 5 3 ♥ 6 ♦ 2 ♣ J 7 6 5 3 2	N W E S	♠ 10 2 ♥ 5 4 3 2 ♦ K Q J 10 7 5 ♣ 9
	♠ A K ♥ J 10 9 8 7 ♦ 9 4 3 ♣ A K 4	

North	East	South	West
1 ♣	1 ♦	1 ♥	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	4 ♦?	Pass
4 NT	Pass	6 ♥	Pass
Pass	Pass		

The Play: 'Marked' Finesse

West opens the deuce of diamonds (obviously a singleton), dummy winning with the Ace. The Ace and King of hearts are led and when West shows out, East is marked with ten red and (consequently) three black cards. Trumps must be drawn, so the heart Queen is cashed and declarer enters his hand with the Ace of spades to lead the Jack of hearts, dummy discarding a low diamond. The two black Kings are led and when East follows to both, the location of every card is marked. The low club is led and the ten is finessed. The Jack of spades is returned, South discarding the Ace of clubs. West wins with the Queen and must yield entry to dummy with a spade or club, affording discards for South's losing diamonds.

CHAPTER XLIII

END-PLAYS

The term 'end-play' applies to three types of plays which occur late in the play of the hand. The first is called the 'throw-in'. An opponent is forced to win a trick when he must make a lead which costs him a trick. There are three typical throw-in situations:

1.

	♠ 6 ♥ 4 2	
♠ A ♥ A Q	N W E S	♠ 5 ♥ 9 3
	♠ 3 ♥ K 6	

South throws West in by leading the spade. Now West must lead hearts, giving South a trick with the King.

2.

	♠ 9 ♥ 5 ♦ 7	
♠ — ♥ Q ♦ 8 4	N W E S	♠ — ♥ — ♦ K J 10
	♠ 5 ♥ 6 ♦ 9	

Spades are trumps. South throws East in with the diamond. East must lead another diamond. South trumps with the ♠ 5 and North discards his losing heart.

3.

	♠ Q 9 ♥ 8	
♠ — ♥ Q J 10	N W E S	♠ 7 5 ♥ K
	♠ — ♥ A 3 2	

South leads the ♥ 2. East must win and lead a spade giving North two tricks.

Declarer first establishes a throw-in card, one which only

the desired opponent will be able to win, and one which he *must* win.

THE THROW-IN CARD

The following are infallible throw-in cards:

1.	2.	3.
♠ 4 3 2	♠ 4 3 2	♠ 4 3 2
North	North	North
South	South	South
♠ A Q 9	♠ A J 10	♠ K 10 7

In any case, North leads; if East plays a high card South covers, if East plays a low card South plays the ♠ 9 in Figure 1 and the ♠ 10 in the other two.

THE STRIPPING PROCESS

Stripping consists in making sure that the opponent has no exit-card. A card which will not win a trick, but which, when led, will not cause the unnecessary loss of a trick, is an exit-card.

1.

	♠ 8 5 3 ♥ — ♦ Q 6 ♣ 4	
♠ — ♥ K 10 ♦ K 8 ♣ Q 10	N W E S	♠ — ♥ Q 6 3 ♦ J 9 ♣ 6
	♠ 10 7 2 ♥ — ♦ A 5 ♣ 3	

Spades are trumps.

Here is a case in which South has stripped his and dummy's hands. West, thrown in by a club lead, has plenty of high cards yet can make no lead without losing a trick.

2.

	♠ 8 ♥ A K J ♦ 8 2 ♣ —	
♠ Q J ♥ 9 ♦ A Q ♣ Q	N W E S	♠ A ♥ Q 8 7 6 3 ♦ — ♣ —
	♠ 9 6 3 ♥ — ♦ 6 4 ♣ 3	

No trumps.

Here is a case in which South has stripped his opponent's hand. East, thrown in with the spade, must lead to dummy and give up three tricks.

Timing is not a serious consideration when declarer is equally willing to throw in either opponent—when he has a combination such as A 10 x in one hand and K 9 x in the

other; or when he has Q x in one hand and A x in the other, and will have a chance to finesse if the suit is led by an opponent.

THE SQUEEZE

Elsewhere I have discussed the principle of idle and busy cards.

A busy card is one which will have a definite duty in the play of the hand, either as a stopper or as a guard to a stopper. Every busy card is equivalent to one full trick. If I hold A K J and my opponent holds Q 3 2 he may as well throw away the Queen as the deuce. A 'squeeze' is a play which forces an opponent to throw a busy card.

The success of a squeeze play is dependent on:

1. A stripping process which removes from the hand all non-essential cards.
2. Entries.
3. Position.

THE STRIPPING PROCESS

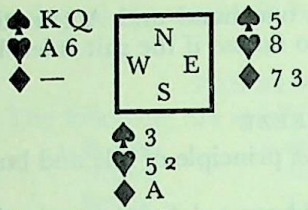
A card in an opponent's hand is not, strictly speaking, busy if his partner can also stop the suit. He can throw away a card which may seem to be a stopper and yet declarer will not profit. The first thing for declarer to look for is two suits in which one opponent has the *only* stoppers. These are his busy cards. When he can be forced to discard one of these cards he is squeezed.

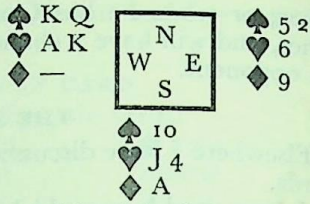
The second problem of declarer is to remove from that opponent's hand all idle cards. Declarer simply counts up the number of cards required by this opponent to stop the two suits, and then plans to reduce him to that number of cards.

When the opponent has been stripped to busy cards only, declarer must still have a winner to lead which the opponent can neither follow to nor ruff.

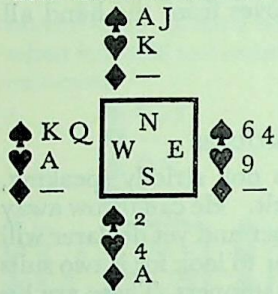
Finally, declarer must be able at the time he applies the squeeze to win all but one of the remaining tricks.

1.	♠ A J ♥ K 2 ♦ —	2.	♠ A J 6 ♥ Q ♦ —





In each case there are no trumps and South leads the ♦ Ace, a card that West can neither follow to nor ruff. Nevertheless, there is no squeeze in this case. In Fig. 1 West has an idle card, the ♥ 6 which he can throw away. In Fig. 2 West's cards are all busy but South does not hold all but one of the remaining tricks. In the following example it will be seen that the squeeze is present because both conditions are fulfilled.



Again there are no trumps and South leads the ♦ Ace. All West's cards are busy and South has two of the three remaining tricks—all but one. Therefore, West is squeezed. If he discards the Ace, North throws the ♠ Jack; if West throws a spade North lets the heart go.

Therefore an essential part of the stripping process is to count up the number of top tricks in the combined hands and if the number falls short of the required all-but-one, *then purposely and immediately lose that many tricks.* In losing tricks be careful to lose the trick in a suit in which you still retain a stopper, and also be careful that when the opponents get the lead they cannot knock out an entry essential to the squeeze.

ENTRIES

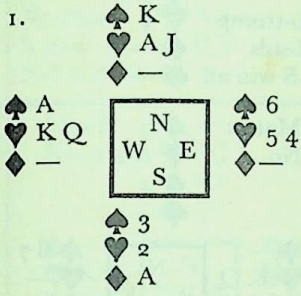
A player does not have to worry much about keeping a stopper when declarer has no entry to the suit he is trying to stop. An essential part of the squeeze is that after the squeeze has been effected and the opponent has discarded a stopper, there must be an entry to whatever card has been established by his discard.

Obviously the hand which wins the squeezing trick will remain in the lead so the important thing to remember is that an entry must be kept to the hand that does not win the squeezing trick.

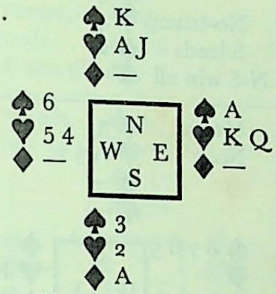
POSITION

When both establishable cards, which the opponent is trying to stop, are in the same hand (declarer or dummy) there will be no squeeze unless the opponent plays *before* that hand.

1.

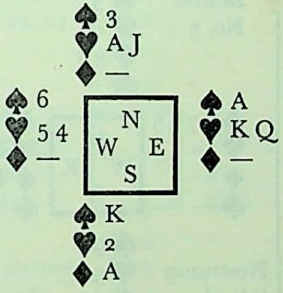


2.



In Fig. 1. when South leads the ♦ Ace, West is squeezed; but in Fig. 2 East, though he holds the same cards, will not be squeezed because North must discard first. Whatever suit North discards, East's stopper in that suit is no longer needed and he can throw it without loss.

However, when the establishable cards are divided between declarer and dummy it does not make any difference which opponent holds the stoppers because declarer and dummy will both have superfluous cards and neither will be forced to let go an essential card. Note in the diagram that when South leads the ♦ Ace North can fearlessly discard the ♠ 3 and yet East is squeezed because if he throws his spade stopper South remains in the lead to cash the ♠ King before taking the ♥ Ace.



Sometimes to effect a squeeze declarer must cash the

TYPICAL SQUEEZE POSITIONS

Matrix No. 1

	♠ 3	
	♥ A 2	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	
♠ 8 7 6	N	♠ —
♥ —	W E	♥ K Q
♦ —	S	♦ A
♣ —		♣ —
	♠ 9	
	♥ 4	
	♦ 2	
	♣ —	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 2

	♠ —	
	♥ A 2	
	♦ 2	
	♣ —	
—	N	♠ 8 7 6
♥ K Q	W E	♥ —
♦ A	S	♦ —
♣ —		♣ —
	♠ 9 3	
	♥ 4	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 3

	♠ 3	
	♥ A 3 2	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	
♠ 8 7 6 5	N	♠ —
♥ —	W E	♥ K Q
♦ —	S	♦ A
♣ —		♣ A
	♠ 9	
	♥ 4	
	♦ 2	
	♣ 2	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 4

	♠ 9	
	♥ A 2	
	♦ 4	
	♣ —	
♠ —	N	♠ 8 7
♥ K Q	W E	♥ —
♦ K	S	♦ Q 3
♣ A		♣ —
	♠ 4	
	♥ —	
	♦ A J	
	♣ 2	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 5

	♠ 3	
	♥ A	
	♦ 3 2	
	♣ —	
♠ 8 7 6 5	N	♠ —
♥ —	W E	♥ K Q
♦ —	S	♦ K Q
♣ —		♣ —
	♠ 9	
	♥ 3 2	
	♦ A	
	♣ —	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 6

	♠ —	
	♥ A	
	♦ 3 2	
	♣ —	
♠ —	N	♠ 8 7 6
♥ Q J	W E	♥ —
♦ A	S	♦ —
♣ —		♣ —
	♠ 9	
	♥ K 10	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

TYPICAL SQUEEZE POSITIONS

Matrix No. 7

	♠ 9 ♥ 4 ♦ A 3 ♣ —	
♠ 8 7 ♥ — ♦ K 5 ♣ —	N W E S	♠ — ♥ K Q ♦ J 6 ♣ —
	♠ — ♥ A 2 ♦ Q 7 ♣ —	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 8

	♠ 4 ♥ A 2 ♦ A 3 ♣ —	
♠ 6 5 ♥ — ♦ 8 7 6 ♣ —	N W E S	♠ 7 ♥ K Q ♦ K Q ♣ —
	♠ 9 8 ♥ 4 ♦ J 4 ♣ —	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 9

	♠ — ♥ A J ♦ A 2 ♣ —	
♠ — ♥ K Q ♦ K Q ♣ —	N W E S	♠ A ♥ 8 7 ♦ 8 ♣ —
	♠ 6 ♥ 6 5 ♦ 6 ♣ —	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win 3
tricks

Matrix No. 10

	♠ 3 ♥ A 2 ♦ — ♣ 5 4	
♠ 8 7 6 ♥ — ♦ — ♣ K 6	N W E S	♠ — ♥ K Q ♦ A ♣ 8 7
	♠ 9 ♥ 4 ♦ 2 ♣ A Q	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win 4
tricks

Matrix No. 11

	♠ K ♥ A 2 ♦ 6 ♣ 2	
♠ 4 ♥ K Q J ♦ — ♣ A	N W E S	♠ A 2 ♥ — ♦ K Q J ♣ —
	♠ Q 3 ♥ 6 ♦ A 2 ♣ —	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win 4
tricks

Matrix No. 12

	♠ — ♥ A 2 ♦ 2 ♣ —	
♠ — ♥ Q 8 ♦ A ♣ —	N W E S	♠ — ♥ K 7 ♦ — ♣ A
	♠ 9 ♥ 4 ♦ — ♣ 2	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

TYPICAL SQUEEZE POSITIONS

Matrix No. 13

	♠ —	
	♥ 4	
	♦ A 2	
	♣ 2	
♠ —	N	♠ 8
♥ K 8	W E	♥ Q 7
♦ K 8	S	♦ —
♣ —		♣ A
	♠ 9	
	♥ A 2	
	♦ 4	
	♣ —	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 14

	♠ 3	
	♥ A K 2	
	♦ —	
	♣ —	
♠ —	N	♠ —
♥ Q 8 7	W E	♥ J 6 5
♦ —	S	♦ A
♣ A		♣ —
	♠ 9	
	♥ 4	
	♦ 2	
	♣ 2	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 15

	♠ 6	
	♥ 3 2	
	♦ —	
	♣ 3	
♠ —	N	♠ —
♥ 8	W E	♥ K Q
♦ 8	S	♦ K Q
♣ 8 7		♣ —
	♠ —	
	♥ A	
	♦ 3 2	
	♣ 9	

Spades trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 16

	♠ —	
	♥ A 2	
	♦ A 2	
	♣ A 6 5	
♠ —	N	♠ —
♥ K 8	W E	♥ Q 7
♦ K 8	S	♦ Q 7 6
♣ Q K J		♣ 8 7
	♠ 9 8 7	
	♥ 4 3	
	♦ 4 3	
	♣ —	

Spades trump
S leads
N-S win all

Matrix No. 17

	♠ —	
	♥ A 2	
	♦ 3 2	
	♣ —	
♠ —	N	♠ 8 7
♥ K Q	W E	♥ —
♦ A K	S	♦ —
♣ —		♣ A K
	♠ 9	
	♥ 4	
	♦ 4	
	♣ 3	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win 3 tricks

Matrix No. 18

	♠ 3	
	♥ 3	
	♦ A 3 2	
	♣ —	
♠ 8 7 6	N	♠ —
♥ A K	W E	♥ 4
♦ —	S	♦ Q J 8
♣ —		♣ A
	♠ 9	
	♥ —	
	♦ K 4	
	♣ K Q	

No-trump
S leads
N-S win 4 tricks

EXPLANATION OF SQUEEZE POSITIONS (MATRICES)

1. South leads ♠. East's discard establishes a red deuce.

2. South leads ♠ 9. If West discards ♥, dummy discards ♦ and vice versa.

3. South leads ♠. If East discards ♥, dummy's suit is established. If East discards an Ace, South cashes the winner thereby established, squeezing East once more.

4. South leads ♠. If West discards ♥ or ♣ a deuce is established; if ♦, there is a finesse against East's Q.

5. South leads the spade, next the Ace of East's discard; then the other Ace, and the remaining card is a winner.

6. South leads ♠. North discards same suit as West.

7. South leads ♦ Q, West covers and North wins with A. North leads ♠ and East is squeezed.

8. South leads ♦ 4 to ♦ A and cashes both spades, North discarding ♦ 3. East is squeezed.

9. South leads ♠. West is squeezed.

10. South leads ♣ Q, West winning. South then cashes both black winners. East is squeezed.

11. South leads ♠, East winning. East's return permits South to cash a spade and a diamond. West is squeezed. If East does not take ♠ A, North leads ♣ 2, South discarding ♥. On ♥ return East is squeezed.

12. South leads ♠. West must discard ♥, so North discards ♦. Then East is squeezed.

13. South leads ♠. West must discard ♥, dummy discards ♦. The ♦ A is cashed and East is squeezed.

14. South leads ♠. West must discard ♥ and East is squeezed.

15. South leads ♣. If East discards ♥, South cashes ♥ A and dummy is good; if East discards ♦, North ruffs ♦ and South hand is good.

16. South leads ♠. If West discards ♣, a club-ruff establishes winner. If West discards otherwise, North discards same suit and that A is taken. The ♣ A is cashed, South discarding from other red suit. A club is ruffed and the last trump led, the situation then being similar to Matrix No. 12.

17. South leads ♠. If West discards ♥, North's deuce is established. If West discards ♦, dummy discards ♥ 2 and South leads ♦.

18. South leads ♠. East's only safe discard is ♥ 4. South then leads ♣.

master card of a suit so that the hand which held it may later discard freely. By so doing he *seems* to be setting up a trick for the opponents. The seeming sacrifice strikes the fancy of most players and a play of this type is known as the Vienna Coup (page 492).

VARIATIONS

The mechanism of the squeeze is essentially simple because the same underlying principles apply to all its forms.

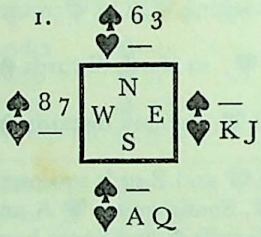
There are many variations, however, which are explained in detail in *The Red Book on Play*. The 'matrices' shown on the previous pages illustrate the typical end positions of the squeeze in its different forms.

TRUMP-REDUCING PLAYS

The least difficult branch of end-plays is the trump-reducing play. It is, however, much revered because one of its variations is known as the Grand Coup.

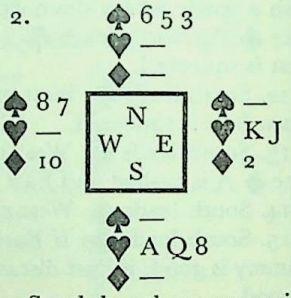
The purpose of a trump-reducing play is to utilize a trump tenace which cannot be used for a finesse because there is no trump in the opposite hand to lead.

1.



Hearts are trumps, with South holding the major tenace over East. No finesse is possible because dummy has no trump, but if dummy leads a spade, East must trump and South by over-trumping wins the last two tricks.

2.



Here South has the same major tenace over East, but when dummy leads a spade East discards a diamond. South must win the trick and then, being in the lead, must allow East to win with the ♥ King. Here South lost a trick because he had too many trumps. Hence the name trump-reducing play.

The execution of the trump-reducing play depends upon precise timing, which is usually nothing more or less than precise counting:

1. Count the number of trumps held by the defender, then deduct them from the number of trumps you hold yourself. The difference is the number of trumps you must remove from your hand by ruffing.

2. The number of entries to dummy required is the same as the number of times you must ruff, plus one.

The diagrams previously shown make it obvious that the final position must be created by means of the stripping process common to all end-plays. In the trump-reducing plays the stripping consists in removing all cards except trumps from the hands of both declarer and the defender who holds the guarded trump card. The stripping is very simple—in addition to ruffing the required number of times, declarer leads out all plain-suit cards he holds, winning them, of course, if possible, but allowing the adversaries to win them if it is necessary. The final entry to dummy, which will allow the decisive lead to be made when all but trumps are gone, must carefully be retained.

In cashing winners in plain suits, declarer must be extremely cautious, for a void suit in the hand of the adversary who holds the trumps will permit him to ruff, and now he has won his trump trick and the trump-reducing play has gone for naught.

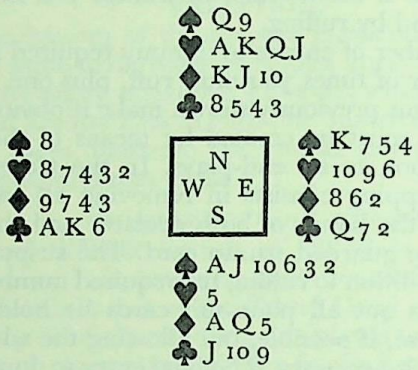
When one of the cards ruffed by declarer to reduce his trump length is a winning card, the play is called the Grand Coup. This is the only respect in which the Grand Coup differs from any other trump-reducing play—the card ruffed must be able to win a trick on its own. If two winning cards are ruffed, it is a Double Grand Coup; there are rare cases of the Triple Grand Coup, while the Quadruple Grand Coup occurs even more rarely than a hand with thirteen spades.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF END-PLAYS

GRAND COUP

The Grand Coup is a trump-reducing play in which declarer, in order to shorten his own trump length, must ruff

one or more *winning* cards. When *one* winning card is ruffed, it is a Single Grand Coup; ruffing *two* winning cards makes a Double Grand Coup, etc. In the following example of the Grand Coup, declarer shortens his trump length by *two* cards, but needs to ruff only *one* card which would otherwise be a winner.



South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♥	Pass
2 ♠	Pass	2 NT	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

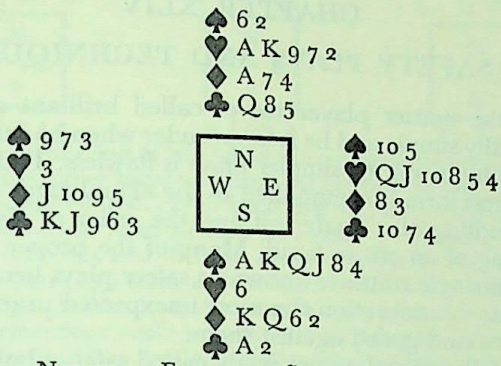
West opens the club King, and East-West take three club tricks. East returns a heart, won by dummy's Jack. Now the Queen and nine of spades are finessed, both winning. The heart Queen is led from dummy and South ruffs it. A small diamond puts dummy in with the ten, and South ruffs the King of hearts.

Next the diamond Queen is led and overtaken by North's King. Now dummy leads the heart Ace. If East ruffs, South can over-ruff; therefore East discards his last diamond and South discards the diamond Ace. When dummy now leads a diamond, East must ruff and South over-ruffs, winning the last two tricks and making four spades.

THE VIENNA COUP

The Vienna Coup is the play of the highest card of a suit, temporarily establishing an opponent's card, only to squeeze him into discarding it (or another equally valuable card) later. The Vienna Coup is used when the *position* of the

opponent's cards would otherwise make a successful squeeze impossible (page 485).



North	East	South	West
1 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
2 NT	Pass	4 ♣?	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 NT	Pass	7 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opens the three of hearts, dummy's Ace winning. South cannot establish the heart suit for a discard because he lacks entries to dummy, and cannot ruff his losing diamond because unless the suit breaks 3-3 (in which case he has no need to ruff) one of the opponents can trump the third round. Therefore South plays for a squeeze. He runs six spades, saving two hearts, two diamonds and two clubs in dummy. Then he lays down the club Ace (Vienna Coup). He then enters dummy with the diamond Ace and leads the heart King, discarding his club. West cannot hold the club King and yet keep the diamond suit stopped. If West discards the club King, it establishes dummy's Queen. If West discards a diamond, all South's diamonds are good.

CHAPTER XLIV

SAFETY PLAYS AND TECHNIQUE

To the master player the so-called brilliant coups are essentially simple and he is far prouder when he can say that his technique on the simpler plays is flawless. Technique in its highest form is exemplified in the actual cards chosen in the handling of a single suit and the order of plays in the handling of an entire hand. Many of the proper technical plays in single suits are known as safety plays because they take into consideration the most unexpected pranks of distribution and guard against them.

The following plays are justly called safety plays because they cannot lose, and may gain.

1. J 7 6 5 2	2. Q 6 5 2	3. 7 4 3
N / W E / S	N / W E / S	N / W E / S
A Q 9 8 4	A K 9 7 3	A Q 6 5 2

In Figure 1 South should decide to finesse for the King, on the basis of the Rule of Five Steps, and in leading to the finesse he should play the Jack. If East covers and West shows out, a finesse against the ten is marked. If East shows out the Jack is allowed to lose to the King so that the Ace and Queen will clear the suit later. In Figure 2 the Queen is the first play, so that if West shows a void two finesses may be taken against East's J 10 x. In Figure 3 the normal play, which is entirely wrong, is to lead a small card from dummy and finesse the Queen. The correct first play is not a finesse but the Ace. With five high cards outstanding, South's two honours cannot possibly drop them all, so one trick must in any case be lost. If South by any chance allows his Queen to be killed by a singleton King, East, whose original holding was J 10 9 8, will win two more tricks and South, for all his long suit, can make only two tricks against the enemy's three. The first play of the Ace will guard against the singleton King and a later lead from dummy toward the Queen will offer South every possible advantage of a finesse with the added ability of ducking if by card-reading South decides that West's original holding may have been King doubleton.

The following plays typify the 'percentage play':

1. A 10 6 5

N
W E
S

K 9 7 4 3

2. A 9 3

N
W E
S

K J 6 5 2

3. Q 10 6

N
W E
S

A 9 8 4 2

In Figure 1 the loss of two tricks can surely be avoided by leading low from either hand and finessing the nine or ten; but if the top card is played from either hand first and the wrong opponent is void, two tricks must be lost. In Figure 3 percentage favours taking two finesses and thereby avoiding a guess. This is a trick I learned years ago from a Frenchman who knew nothing else about Bridge. I introduced it to the Bridge players of this country after a tremendous tussle with the old guard, who for years had been first laying down the Ace, then leading low toward the Queen, then guessing. Figure 2 offers a safety play to lose no more than one trick by first leading the King, then low toward the A 9, and finessing the nine if West follows. (If West shows out the Ace is played and the nine led back toward the Jack.) The 'normal' way of cashing the Ace and then finessing loses two tricks when West holds Q 10 x x.

Other typical long-suit holdings in which there is a 'right way' to play are:

x x x

N
W E
S

A K J x x

Lead the King. Then lead the second round from North. If East follows, finesse the Jack. If this should lose, the Ace will clear the suit. This method of play avoids losing a trick to a singleton Queen in West's hand.

x x x

N
W E
S

A Q 10 x x x

To avoid losing two tricks: Lead a small card from the North hand and if East plays a low card, play the Ace. If East plays the Jack, finesse the Queen. If neither missing honour falls on the first round, re-enter the North hand and lead toward the new combination.

K x x

N
W E
S

A 10 x x x

Lead the King; then a small one from North. If East plays low, finesse the ten. If this should lose, the Ace will clear the suit. The finesse saves a trick if East started with Q J x x. Win the second trick if East plays high.

Q 10 x x

N
W E
S

A K 9 x x

Lead Ace (or King). If either opponent shows out, a finesse is established against his partner. If the first trick is won by the Queen, West will make a trick if he holds J x x x.

10 x x

N
W E
S

A K 8 x x

Lead the Ace. Then lead low from South if (*a*) East drops an honour, or (*b*) West drops the nine or an honour. If either started with four: in (*a*) the ten will make a trick; in (*b*) a third-round finesse is taken through East.

Q 10 9 8

N
W E
S

A x x x

Lead the eight. If East follows, take two finesses through him. If East shows out, win with the Ace and lead through West's King-Jack.

A J x

N
W E
S

K 9 x x x

Lead the Ace. Then enter the South hand and lead low. Play the Jack unless West plays the Queen. If West started with Q 10 x x, the Jack makes; if East, a third-round finesse picks up the ten.

Sometimes the absence of entries or the pressure of time will alter the recommended technique.

DECLARER'S PLAYS AT NO-TRUMP

An equally important branch of Bridge technique is the proper play from dummy to the first trick at no-trump contracts.

With the following suit holdings, assuming that the opening lead is a low card, the proper first play is always dummy's lowest card.

1. 10 2

N
W E
S

A J 3

2. 10 3 2

N
W E
S

A J

3. Q 2

N
W E
S

A 10 3

4. Q 3 2

N
W E
S

A 10

5. Q 2
N
W E
S
K 10 3

6. Q 2
N
W E
S
J 4 3

7. K 2
N
W E
S
J 4 3

8. A J 2
N
W E
S
K 9 3

9. A J 2
N
W E
S
10 3

10. K J 2
N
W E
S
10 3

11. 10 3 2
N
W E
S
K J 4

I use the word 'always' in the full realization that it should be taboo in Bridge books and that even in the cases above there may be exceptions.

The following combinations are usually pure guesses:

1. Q 2
N
W E
S
A 10

2. Q 10
N
W E
S
A 2

3. K 6
N
W E
S
J 5

4. 10 6 3
N
W E
S
K Q 5

In each case, when West leads a low card, unless South has some indication from the bidding he may as well toss a coin. Usually it is safer to play the leader for the higher of the two outstanding cards and therefore to play the Queen in Figures 1 and 2, the King in Figure 3 and low in Figure 4. But I don't want to be blamed if these plays go wrong, and particularly in Figure 4 Declarer is up against it. If he thinks that East has either the Ace or Jack he should play low, but if he thinks West is leading from the Ace-Jack he should put up the ten and hope it wins the first trick.

Finally, the most commonly overlooked technical plays of all occur when the long suit is not in the leader's hand.

1. Q 6 5

9 2
N
W E
S
A J 10 8 7

K 4 3

2. K 6 3

10 5
N
W E
S
A J 8 7 4

Q 9 2

In Figure 1 when West opens the nine either as a short suit lead or in response to a bid by East, dummy should play the Queen and kill an entry (page 447) unless it is positive that West will never again have the lead.

In Figure 2, when West opens the ten, dummy's King should promptly cover and South will have a beautiful tenace over the Jack.

The many other cases in which there is a tremendous amount of difference between playing one card and another can often be worked out by a few seconds of thought at the time.

CHAPTER XLV

CONVENTIONAL LEADS AND PLAYS

The defenders' game has two branches:

1. Information—painting a picture of the hand to partner so that the two hands can be combined for a single purpose as effectively as can declarer's and dummy's hands.

2. Strategy—selecting a point of attack or, when it is not safe to attack, waiting until the proper time to make the most of whatever establishable tricks are available.

The selection of a card to lead or to play for the purpose of giving information is governed by the alphabet of conventional plays. The selection of a particular suit to lead is governed by the strategy of leads.

THE ALPHABET OF CONVENTIONAL PLAYS

Every card that is played, whether in leading, in following suit, or in discarding, conveys a number of inferences which tell the story of the closed hand. Whether a card is played with intent to win a trick or not, it simultaneously fulfils its function of being a signal to partner. Most of these signals are not arbitrary but have their basis in logic and natural inferences.

Signals may be divided into three general categories: Signals to show honours, signals to show long suits of four cards or more; and signals to show short suits of three and fewer cards. These signals may be given in four different ways: by means of leads; when discarding; when following suit; and when winning a trick.

HONOUR LEADS

Since it is not safe to lead an honour except from a sequence and then rarely from a sequence of only two cards any lead of an honour may naturally be expected to show a *leadable sequence* in the player's hand. A leadable sequence consists of:

1. A three-card sequence headed by an honour (K Q J, Q J 10, J 10 9, etc.) or

2. Two touching honours with a third card one step lower (K Q 10 or Q J 9 or J 10 8).

When leading a suit headed by a leadable sequence lead the top of the sequence, regardless of the length of the suit. When the suit is not headed by a leadable sequence the proper lead is in most cases a low card.

Certain sequences are intermediate or middle sequences: K J 10 9, A 10 9 7, K 10 9 2, Q 10 9 2, etc. With such combinations the highest card of the suit is disregarded and the top of the sequence is led; but here the rule of leadable sequences varies. With three ranking cards in a suit it is proper to lead one of them, even though the intermediate sequence itself does not contain a third card in sequence or within one step of the sequence.

1.

	K J 5	
Q 10 9 6	N / W E / S	7 2
	A 8 4 3	

2.

	6 3	
A J 10 8 5	N / W E / S	7 4 2
	K Q 9	

In Figure 1 the lead of the six by West allows South to win the first trick with the eight and by finessing for the Queen, win all four tricks; the lead of the ten assures West of a trick, and if East had the King dummy's Jack would be caught. In Figure 2, the lead of the Jack forces out one of South's honours and if East gets the lead West can run the entire suit; there is the further advantage that if North had the Queen and East the King the Queen would be trapped on the first trick.

The phrase 'middle sequence' denotes a sequence headed by an honour; K 9 8 7 6 is not a middle sequence and the proper lead is the fourth-best.

It follows from all this that the lead of any honour in an unbid suit guarantees the next lower honour in the suit and denies the next higher honour. The one exception is in the case of the Ace-King. From Ace-King the proper lead is the King and not the Ace. The purpose is to make it easy for partner, when he sees the King win the first trick, to know that the leader also has the Ace.

The lead of an Ace therefore does not show a sequence but probably denies one. When a player leads an Ace his

next highest card in the suit is probably the Queen or lower. The one exception is when he has a doubleton Ace-King. Then he leads the Ace and follows it immediately with the King, showing his partner that he has no more and can ruff a third round.

Against no-trump bids the rule of leadable sequences is followed quite closely and the fourth-highest card is led even from suits headed by A K. Against trump bids it is not safe to lead a low card from Ace-King and risk having an honour-trick ruffed later. Likewise, except in the cases of strategical under-leads, it is not safe to lead low from an Ace against a trump bid and is even more unsafe to lead low from a King-Queen.

At no-trump the lead of an Ace is purely conventional, showing a long powerful suit and asking partner to unblock (and at the same time to give information) by playing his highest card of the suit led.

LEADS TO SHOW LONG SUITS

From a suit which contains four cards or more and is not headed by a leadable sequence the proper lead is the fourth-best card. For example, Q 10 8 *6* 4, K J 9 *5* 2; and at no-trump, A K 6 *5* 3 or K Q 3 *2*. Having led the fourth-best, follow it whenever possible with the next lowest card and then with a still lower card if any. Partner can then obtain a precise count of the number of cards held in that suit by the leader.

THE RULE OF ELEVEN

The use of the fourth-best rule makes possible the Rule of Eleven, which was worked out in 1889 by R. F. Foster and later independently discovered by E. F. M. Benecke of Oxford, England.

When the card led is the leader's fourth highest of a suit, subtract the denomination (number of pips) of the card led from 11. The result is the total number of cards, higher than the card led, held by the three other players.

The reason that the Rule of Eleven works is that the cards of a suit are a series of numbers with the lowest number 2 and the highest, the Ace being equivalent to 14. As in all

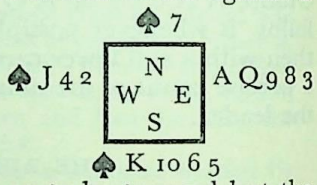
numbers in series, any number subtracted from the highest number gives the total number of higher cards in the series. In Bridge, since three of these higher cards are held by the leader, three is at once deducted from 14 and then by deducting from 11 one gets the number of cards in the other three hands.

SHORT-SUIT LEADS

From a worthless short suit the highest card is usually led; from any doubleton the highest card is led. With three cards in an unbid suit, lead low from K x x, Q x x or J x x. It is better to make partner think that you have a four-card suit than to sacrifice the honour. With A x x the Ace should be led unless a deceptive under-lead is to be attempted. With 10 x x the lowest is led against a suit bid but the ten against no-trump.

With a *worthless* three-card suit, provided the middle card is sufficiently high not to be confused with a fourth-best lead, as in 9 8 2 or 9 7 2, the middle card may be led against a suit bid so that on the next play the leader may use his higher card to show his partner that he did not have a doubleton.

In a suit partner has bid, from three cards to Ace, King, Queen or Jack, the highest should be led against a suit bid but the lowest against no-trump. The reason for the low lead against no-trump is that declarer probably has one or two honours in the suit, as in the diagram shown, when a low lead by West allows South's 10 to be trapped but the lead of the ♠ Jack would give South two stoppers.



With any three-card suit containing two touching honours, such as K Q x or Q J x, the conventional lead is the top.

FOLLOWING SUIT AND DISCARDING

Whereas the highest card of a sequence is led, when *playing* to a trick with intent to win the trick, the lowest of touching cards should be played. If your partner leads a suit in which you have A K Q, win with the Queen and not with the King or Ace. The play of any card denies a lower card

which would fulfill the same purpose; thus with Q 10 9 8 7 if a lead is made through the Jack in dummy you play the seven.

DISCARDS

Discards, or follow-suit plays of lower cards are of two types, positive (encouraging) and negative (discouraging). The encouraging or come-on method is an unnecessarily high card. The discouraging or stop method is the play of the lowest available card.

Usually a card such as a 7, 8 or 9 will be encouraging and a 2, 3 or 4 discouraging; but when partner has no lower card than the 7 or 8, he has no choice but to use it as a stop-signal; and when he cannot spare a higher card than the four he may have to play it as a come-on and hope it is read. The partner must systematically analyse such discards by the 'rule of missing pips'; he counts the number of pips on the discarded card and checks up in his own hand and dummy for lower cards if any. If there are no missing lower cards, the discard is undoubtedly negative; but if there is a lower card outstanding which may be held by the player or declarer, the discard may be a come-on; and if there are several outstanding lower cards it almost surely is a come-on.

THE ECHO

When a single card cannot be clearly read as a signal, a player may employ the echo or high-low. First he plays a card which is not his lowest, and follows it at his first opportunity with a lower card of the same suit. This is unmistakably a come-on signal provided partner watches the sequence of the plays.

Another valuable use of the echo is to show distribution. In following to a long suit which declarer is trying to establish, play your lowest with exactly three cards of the suit but echo if holding two or four cards of the suit.

1. K Q J 10 5

6 4 2 | N / W E / S | A 8 7

9 3

2. K Q J 10 5

6 2 | N / W E / S | A 8 7

9 4 3

In Figure 1 South leads the nine and West plays the deuce. East, knowing that West has three cards of the suit, holds up his Ace once but wins the second trick. If he held up twice South would get an extra trick. In Figure 2 West plays the six on the first play and the deuce on the second. East knows he should hold up twice and win the third round.

THE TRUMP ECHO

In signalling with the trump suit a different sort of distributional echo is used, exactly the opposite of the one just explained. Here a player with three trumps plays high-low, and with two trumps plays them in normal order, the low one first.

Thus, a player holding 7 4 2 in trumps will play first the four and then the deuce, whether he is following suit or ruffing. This shows that he has at least one more trump.

THE SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNAL

During the last few years an auxiliary signalling method known as the suit preference signal[1] has become very popular. This signal is so devised as never to interfere with the normal conventions of leads and plays previously described, and can therefore be unusually effective. The suit preference signal is based upon the fact that usually a defender, when faced with a difficult choice of leads, knows that his choice lies between two suits and only two.

An unnecessarily high card used in leading, discarding, or following suit, asks partner at his first opportunity to lead the higher of the two suits other than trump[2] and other than the suit in which the signal was made.

1. The opening leader holds a trick on which his partner shows out. He now plans to lead the suit again for his partner to ruff. If he wishes his partner to return the higher of the

[1] The suit preference convention was submitted in manuscript form to *The Bridge World Magazine* by Hy. Lavinthal in the winter of 1932-33, long before it was known or played by any expert players to my knowledge. Since then other players have claimed credit for originating it and it is of course quite possible that they came independently to the same conclusions as Mr. Lavinthal.

[2] At no-trump contracts a suit in which declarer is so strong that to lead it would be futile is automatically eliminated from consideration; at trump contracts, the trump suit.

two suits in question, he now leads an unnecessarily high card; if the lower of the two suits, an unnecessarily low card.

2. The opening leader holds the first trick and a view of dummy makes it obvious to both partners that he will now switch suits. His partner's play to the trick he wins is not a come-on or stop signal but an indication of whether he should switch to the higher or lower of the two possible suits.

3. In discarding, a player throws an unnecessarily high card in a suit in which he obviously cannot be signalling. This discard indicates his preference between the two suits other than the suit he discards and the suit on which he discards.

4. Finally, any play of a high card which can be read as not meaning any of the signals described in the previous pages calls for the higher of the two leadable suits, and vice versa.

LEAD DIRECTING DOUBLES

A double of a slam contract asks partner to make an unnatural lead. That is, it cautions the leader not to open a suit bid by either defender or a trump. This usually narrows the choice down to one of two other suits, and the leader selects the suit from the texture of his hand, plus bidding inferences.

With great length in some suit, for instance, the leader may expect that the double was based on a void in that suit and ability to ruff it. In other cases the leader may have a singleton and his partner a trump stopper. If the singleton is in a bid suit, the doubler may have inferred that it would not have been opened without the double.

A double of a three no-trump bid often indicates a safe opening lead, (page 278).

HANDS ILLUSTRATING THE SUIT PREFERENCE SIGNAL

1. SUIT PREFERENCE DISCARD

	♠ K 8 5 ♥ 10 7 ♦ K 8 4 ♣ Q J 10 8 4	
♠ Q 6 2 ♥ A 9 5 4 ♦ Q 5 3 ♣ 9 5 2	N W E S	♠ J 9 4 ♥ 8 6 3 2 ♦ A J 10 2 ♣ 7 3

♠ A 10 7 3
♥ K Q J
♦ 9 7 6
♣ A K 6

South	West	North	East
1 NT	Pass	3 NT	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opens the ♣ 9, having no favourable long suit to lead. South wins and lays down the heart King. West takes the Ace and East plays the ♥ 2. Since East obviously does not want clubs led, and can hardly want a continuation of hearts (the suit South first seeks to establish), East's discard of the ♥ 2 may be read as indicating a preference in the other two suits, spades and diamonds. It being his lowest heart, it calls for a lead of the lower of these suits, that is, diamonds. West leads the diamond Queen, the proper entry-saving play designed to keep West in the lead in case dummy's King is not put up. Whatever dummy plays, East can run four diamond tricks and defeat the contract immediately.

2. A LEAD TO SHOW SUIT PREFERENCE

♠ K 10 7
♥ 10 8 4
♦ A J 10 8
♣ Q 7 3

♠ J 4 3
♥ A Q 9 7 6 3
♦ —
♣ K 10 9 6

N
W E
S

♠ 8 2
♥ J
♦ Q 7 6 5 2
♣ J 8 5 4 2

♠ A Q 9 6 5
♥ K 5 2
♦ K 9 4 3
♣ A

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	2 ♥	2 ♠	Pass
4 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

West opens the heart Ace. When East plays the Jack, West knows he can ruff the second round. After ruffing the heart Jack East of course will not lead a trump, but in choosing between diamonds and clubs, he will be more likely to lead a club than to

lead into dummy's strong diamonds. West therefore leads the heart Queen to the second trick, and East ruffs with the ♠ 2. West's lead of an unnecessarily high card having indicated to East a preference for the higher of the two minor suits, East now returns a diamond and West ruffs. East then ruffs another heart and West another diamond, defeating the contract by two tricks. Had East first led clubs instead of diamonds, South could have made his contract.

3. SHOWING SUIT PREFERENCE WHEN FOLLOWING SUIT

	♠ A K 7 ♥ Q 10 8 ♦ 9 3 ♣ K Q 10 8 5	
♠ 4 3 2 ♥ 9 7 6 4 3 ♦ 8 7 6 2 ♣ A	N W E S	♠ 10 6 ♥ A K ♦ Q J 10 5 4 ♣ J 4 3 2
	♠ Q J 9 8 5 ♥ J 5 2 ♦ A K ♣ 9 7 6	

North	East	South	West
1 ♣	1 ♦	1 ♠	2 ♦
2 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

West opens the club Ace, which is obviously a singleton because otherwise he would not open dummy's bid suit. Since East has bid diamonds, West plans to switch to diamonds, hoping to find East with an entry in that suit. However, East plays the club Jack on the Ace. This unnecessarily high card indicates a preference for the higher of the two suits other than trumps. West therefore shifts to hearts rather than to diamonds. This starts a cross-ruff which enables East-West to win six tricks instead of three.

Culbertson Standard Table—Alphabet of Conventional Leads

(This table shows only the *card* to lead. For the *suit* to lead, see page 505.) the proper lead is in bold type.

FOURTH-BEST LEADS			SHORT SUIT LEADS	
A-K-Q-**x**-x[1]	A-10-x-**x** or longer	9-**7**-x-x	10-x[4]	K-**10**-9[5]
A-K-J-**x**-x-x[2]	K-J-x-**x** or longer	9-4-3-2	9-x	A-x-**x**[6]
A-K-J-**x**-x[2]	K-10-8-**x** or longer	8-x-x-x	8-x	A-10-**x**[6]
K-Q-9-**x**-x-x[2]	K-9-8-**7** or longer	x-x-x-x	x-x	A-10-9[6]
K-Q-9-**x**-x[2]	K-x-x-**x** or longer	J-10-9-**x** of Partner's suit	10-x-x	A-J-**x**[6]
K-Q-9-**x**[2]	Q-10-8-**x** or longer	10-9-8-**x** of Partner's suit	9-x-x	A-**J**-10[6]
Q-J-8-**x**-x-x[3]	Q-9-8-**7** or longer	From A-x-x-**x** or more of Partner's suit lead fourth-best at no-trump; Ace at trump contracts.	8-x-x	A-**K**-x
Q-J-8-**x**-x	Q-x-x-**x** or longer		x-x-x	**K**-Q-x
Q-J-8-**x**	J-9-8-**7** or longer		J-x-**x**[5]	**Q**-J-x
J-10-7-**x** or longer	J-x-x-**x** or longer		Q-x-**x**[5]	**J**-10-x
10-9-6-**x** or longer	10-x-x-**x** or longer		Q-10-**x**[5]	
A-Q-10-**x**	9-8-7-**6**-x or longer		K-x-**x**[5]	
A-Q-x-**x** or longer	x-x-x-**x**-x or longer		K-J-**x**[5]	
A-J-x-**x** or longer	9-8-x-x		K-10-**x**[5]	

When your Partner leads a small card, it shows one of the above combinations (unless it is Irregular or Inferential Lead).

Use the Rule of Eleven to determine whether the lead is from a long suit or short suit (*see page* 445).

Notes: 1 With a side entry, or when there is little hope of Partner's having an entry, lead the King. Against trump bids, always lead the King. 2 Against trump bids lead the King. 3 Against trump bids the Queen is led. 4 Other *doubleton honours* are shown in the table of Honour Leads. 5 The highest or middle card may sometimes be led in an *inferential lead.* 6 Against trump bids the Ace is led, except in the case of *underleads.*

Culbertson Standard Table

ALPHABET OF CONVENTIONAL LEADS

HONOUR LEADS

(This table shows only the *card* to lead. For the *suit* to lead, see p. 505)

Holding in Suit	Against No-trump		Against Trump Bids	
	Lead	2nd Lead	Lead	2nd Lead
A-K-Q-J with 2 or more others	A	K	K	J
A-K-Q-J alone or with 1 other	K	J	K	J
A-K-Q with 3 or more others	A	K	K	Q
A-K-Q-x-x or A-K-Q-x	K	Q	K	Q
A-K-J-x-x-x-x or more	A	K	K	A
A-K-10-x-x-x-x or more	A	K	K	A[1]
A-K-J, A-K-10 or or A-K[2] heading 4, 5-, or 6-card suit	*See Table of Fourth-Best Leads*		K	A[1]
A-K-x	K	A	K	A[1]
A-K alone			A	K
K-Q-J alone or with others	K	Q	K	J
K-Q-10 alone or with others	K		K	
K-Q-x-x-x-x-x or more	K		K	
K-Q heading 4-, 5-, or 6-card suit	*See Table of Fourth-Best Leads*		K	
K-Q-x	K		K	
K-Q alone			Q	
Q-J-10 alone or with others	Q		Q	
Q-J-9 alone or with others	Q		Q	
Q-J-x-x-x-x-x or more	Q		Q	
Q-J-x	Q		Q	
Q-J alone	Q		Q	
J-10-9 alone or with others	J		J	
J-10-8 alone or with others	J		J	
J-10-x	J		J	
J-10 alone	J		J	
10-9-8 alone or with others	10		10	
10-9-7 alone or with others	10		10	
10-9 alone	10		10	
A-K-J-10 alone or with 1 or 2 others	J		K	
A-Q-J-x or longer	Q[3]		A	
A-Q-10-9 or longer	10[4]		A	
A-J-10-x or longer	J		A	
A-10-9-x or longer	10		A	

Continued on next page

HONOUR LEADS—*Continued*

Holding in Suit	Against No-trump		Against Trump Bids	
	Lead	2nd Lead	Lead	2nd Lead
K-J-10-x or longer	J		J	
K-10-9-x or longer	10		10	
Q-10-9-x or longer	10		10	
A-x, K-x, Q-x, J-x — Doubleton or Singleton	Lead high card at no-trump or trump			
10-x or 10-x-x	10		10	
A-x-x-x of Partner's suit	*See Table of Fourth-Best Leads*		A	
K-Q-x or more of Partner's suit	K		K	
A-J-x, A-x-x, K-J-x, K-x-x, Q-10-x, Q-x-x, J-x-x, of Partner's suit	Lowest		Highest	
Q-J-x-x of Partner's suit	Q		Q	

When your Partner leads an honour, it shows one of the above combinations in which that honour is indicated (unless it is an Irregular or an inferential Lead).

From all other combinations a small card should be led (see Tables of Fourth-Best and Short-Suit Leads, pages 508).

NOTES

1 Unless Partner follows to the first lead with the Queen, in which case the second lead should be a low card.

2 From A-K-x-x-x-x-x the proper lead varies, see page 520.

3 With A-Q-J-10-x-x or A-Q-J-x-x-x-x the Ace should be led if the hand contains a side entry.

4 If bidding indicates the King in Dummy, lead the Queen.

Note: See also Table of Opening Leads classified by preference, pages 519-521.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE DEFENDERS' GAME

With the opening lead the defenders inaugurate their campaign to defeat declarer's contract. The fact that they are called defenders does not mean that they cannot attack. Their line of defence may take one of two forms: A quick attempt to establish their tricks and cash them as soon as they get the lead with whatever stoppers they hold (the attacking game); and an attempt to prevent declarer from developing his own tricks by holding their stoppers until the lead comes to them (the protecting game).

LEADS AGAINST NO-TRUMP

Speed and number are the principal preoccupation in defence against no-trump. Hence the following basic rule, which has few exceptions, governing leads against no-trump: open your longest and best suit, regardless of tenaces.

When a hand contains two long suits, usually the longer should be opened if they are of unequal length and the stronger when they are of the same length. This general advice is modified, however, by considerations of speed and entries.

With one suit K Q J x and another suit 10 x x x x the stronger four-card suit is preferred because the long suit may never be established. Change the five-card holding to Q J x x x and the five-card suit is preferable. When the choice between the suits is about an even guess, but one is a major and the other a minor, the major should usually be preferred. The opponents in the course of their bidding might have gone to no-trump without ever mentioning a minor suit but would probably have shown any biddable major suit.

With a seven-card suit headed by A K J or A K 10, or from a six-card suit headed by A K Q, the Ace should be led; but from a weaker long suit it is better to open fourth best rather than high from an A K combination, when the

hand has no entry. A doubleton and an entry in partner's hand will probably allow the suit to be brought in eventually. Even with A K Q x x it is better to open fourth highest on the chance that partner will have a doubleton and declarer will hold J x x x, unless there is danger that declarer can run his nine tricks unless the entire five-card suit can be taken right away.

SHORT SUIT LEADS

There are three situations which call for a short-suit lead against no-trump.

1. Warning short leads. You hold

♠ 7 5 ♥ 9 6 2 ♦ 8 4 3 ♣ J 7 6 4 3

Suppose you open your long club suit and your partner has a couple of entries and gets in to continue clubs. Eventually you will establish the suit perhaps, but you will never get the lead to use it.

With such a hand it is preferable to open the ♥ 9 or ♦ 8 and hope you will be lucky enough to hit a long suit in partner's hand and that he will have enough entries, aided by the extra *tempo* you have given him by the opening lead, to establish his suit.

2. Waiting short leads. With a hand containing distributed strength but no suit long enough or strong enough to be reasonably sure of establishing a long card, it is best to open a worthless short suit and wait for the lead to come to you in the other suits. A typical hand would be—

♠ 9 7 3 ♥ Q 5 ♦ A Q 6 3 ♣ K J 7 5

The proper lead is the ♠ 9 .The odds are against establishing the long card in either diamonds or clubs, and a lead away from either tenace may give declarer his precious ninth trick.

This does not apply when the strength in any suit is in a leadable sequence. There is no better waiting lead than a four-card or longer suit headed by a sequence.

3. Inferential short leads. The longest suit in a hand must sometimes be abandoned either because bidding information indicates that it cannot be established or because there will not be time to establish it before declarer has made his game.

For example, it is usually futile to open a long suit which the opponents have bid unless it is so solid that by leading it you cannot sacrifice a trick. There is also the typical case in which you can be sure declarer has a long six- or seven-card minor suit which he can run at once, and that he has your longest suit stopped. In such cases you may have to fall back on a desperation lead of a suit such as K J x in the hope that your partner has the other high cards in the suit and enough length to defeat the contract.

CHOICE OF SHORT SUITS

As between a three-card suit and a two-card suit, choose the three-card suit. You want the combined length of the suit to be as great as possible.

Avoid any doubleton or three-card suit headed by an honour. Any guarded honour may turn into a stopper in the course of play.

As a stab, a three-card suit headed by touching honours is often effective. K Q x and Q J x are dangerous leads, and should not be used except in desperate cases but J 10 x and 10 9 x are acceptable short-suit leads, often better than a worthless suit because they solidify any suit partner may hold and are very unlikely to sacrifice a trick or a stopper.

A K x has a value as two stoppers apart from its trick-winning value, and is strictly within the classification of desperation leads.

LEADS AGAINST TRUMP BIDS

As a rule attacking leads are to be sought at trump bids when a good attacking lead is available. The best attacking leads are from any A K Q sequence, or from any five-card or longer suit headed by A K. These, together with a singleton, doubleton, or three-card sequence in partner's bid suit, form a special class of preferred opening leads. They combine the finest timing (immediate winning of tricks) with least danger of sacrificing a stopper in a suit declarer will need to establish.

Inferior to these leads only in immediacy are those from solid sequences such as K Q J x, Q J 10 x, or high cards in partner's suit. Even a tenace remainder of partner's suit

will, when combined with the high cards he undoubtedly holds in his suit, solidify his suit and make it a preferred opening lead.

Far below the sequence leads on the list of attacking leads are the four-card suits headed by a single honour. These suits should not be opened except when the situation definitely calls for action. If such a four-card suit *must* be opened, prefer K x x x to Q x x x, and as between Q 10 x x and Q x x x prefer the Q-10 suit, which any honour in partner's hand will probably protect.

Finally, when it comes to a suit headed by A Q, A J or K J, we can almost state as a rule 'do not open blindly from any tenace—try something else'. And yet even here the necessity for cashing the setting tricks at once may force a desperation lead from such a holding.

THE RUFFING GAME

The defenders, like the declarer, have a third source of tricks at trump bids—the ruffers.

A singleton, A x or K x in a suit partner has bid are excellent introductions to a ruffing game, because partner is so likely to be able to win the trick and return the suit immediately before declarer can get in to draw trumps. The lead of a singleton or a doubleton Ace of an unbid suit is a justifiable lead only if the leader's hand contains A x or K x x in trumps so that he can stop the suit and still have a worthless trump left for ruffing; or two or three small trumps if partner has shown strength and may be able either to win an immediate trick in the suit led or stop the trump suit in time to give the leader a ruff. Otherwise the singleton lead should be avoided except when the situation is desperate and immediate ruffing tricks are all that can be hoped for.

THE FORCE GAME

The object of the force game is to shorten declarer's trump suit and so weaken it that he will be unable to draw trumps. Favourable conditions for a force exist when the leader has, or infers in his partner's hand, four or more trumps plus a long side suit which can probably be established quickly.

Even the rule of not leading from suit and tenace positions

is often disregarded when the bidding and texture of the player's hand indicate the advisability of trying the force game. Tenaces such as A Q x x x and A J x x should still be avoided, but from a five- or six-card suit headed by the Ace, King or Queen, there is a great deal of hope if the suit is started immediately. The following are typical hands for the force game, spades being trumps. The correct lead is in italic.

1. ♠ A J 7 4	2. ♠ 10 8 5 2	3. ♠ K 5 4 2
♥ 8	♥ A 6	♥ 7
♦ K 10 8 *4* 3	♦ Q 10 5 *3*	♦ *K* Q 7 5 4 3
♣ 10 7 2	♣ A K 4	♣ 9 2

The technique of the force game is to establish the long suit as quickly as possible and then to lead it at every opportunity, each time making declarer use one of his long trumps to stop the suit.

THE WAITING LEAD

The lead of a worthless doubleton, despite its traditionally bad reputation, is an ideal waiting lead. In a hand such as ♠ K Q 8 ♥ 9 7 ♦ A Q 6 5 ♣ Q 9 6 2 it saves, at no risk, the valuable tenace positions in other suits, and has a further advantage of occasionally producing a ruffing trick. This is the reason a worthless doubleton should be preferred as a waiting lead to a three-card suit.

When the hand contains tenaces but no plain-suit doubleton, a trump from two or three small cards is an excellent waiting lead, and has this in common with the lead from any other worthless suit: it never costs a trick in the suit led. The worst it can do is save the declarer a guess on a two-way finesse. A singleton trump, however, is one of the worst leads in Bridge, often trapping Q x x or J x x x in partner's hand when declarer, if unassisted by the lead, would have played for a drop rather than finesse.

A waiting trump lead should not be confused with the defenders' trump defence. In many hands a trump is the best opening lead to stop ruffers in dummy or to make declarer's and dummy's trumps fall together when he is planning a cross-ruff. A trump is led as part of the anti-ruff game in the following situations:

1. When the bidding shows that dummy's hand consists mainly of distributional strength, short suits and trumps.

2. When declarer has only a four-card suit and dummy has at most four trumps.

3. Against pre-emptive bids, when the trump suit is probably solid and it is desirable to throw declarer in and make him lead some other suits.

As effective as a worthless trump suit is a holding such as A x x or K x x, from which the small card can be led to remove declarer's trumps without great danger of sacrificing a trick.

SLAM LEADS

Against slam bids the choice between attacking and protecting leads becomes more difficult than ever because the amount of time available for suit establishment is usually so very small.

Against a trump small slam, when it is obvious or probable that declarer will have to give up a trick to establish an essential suit, it is desirable to try to establish a trick on the opening lead to be cashed when the defenders get in with their lone stopper. A lead from a King or a Queen, in the hope that partner will hold the other honour, is therefore often preferable to the safer lead of a doubleton or a sequence such as J 10 9. A singleton is often the proper lead as the only hope.

Against a no-trump slam an attacking lead of this type is too dangerous, since any guarded honour may turn out to be a stopper, and except with something like K Q in one suit and Ace in another, seek a protecting lead.

The worst possible lead against a no-trump small slam is usually an Ace.

LATER LEADS AND DEFENCE

The old rule about leading to dummy's weakness is not a bad rule at all, though it is of course abandoned when a waiting lead, an entry-destroying play, the anti-ruff game or the force game is indicated. If you must lead to strength, when possible, lead up to a solid suit.

A lead through dummy's strength is likewise good if it does not aid declarer in the establishment of long cards.

Thus, a lead through A Q x is proper, but a lead through A Q x x x should be avoided except when the object is to establish exactly one immediate trick.

FINESSING PARTNER'S LEAD

An honour is most valuable when it can be used to capture an opponent's lower ranking honour. On a lead through an honour in dummy, third hand should try to save a higher honour whenever possible until such time as he may cover dummy's honour with it.

For this reason, in Figure 1 when dummy plays low East plays the Jack. It will not win the trick unless West has the Queen but the Ace is saved to capture the King later. If the Ace were played at once and South had the Queen he would win two tricks in the suit anyway. On the same reasoning, in Figure 2 East should finesse the 9, saving the King until dummy plays the Queen. In Figure 3, West does not put up the Ace but plays the 8 and lets dummy's King win a trick, for it would have won sooner or later in any case, and by saving his Ace West may prevent South's winning a second trick with the Queen if he has it.

1. K 7 5
West Leads 2 — N / W E / S — A J 6

2. Q 8 4
West Leads 2 — N / W E / S — K 9 3

3. K 7 5
A 10 8 — N / W E / S — East Leads 2

South plays 6

DEFENDER'S TRUMP MANAGEMENT

A defender should not over-ruff with a high trump when that trump is valuable as a guard to a lower trump in the same hand.

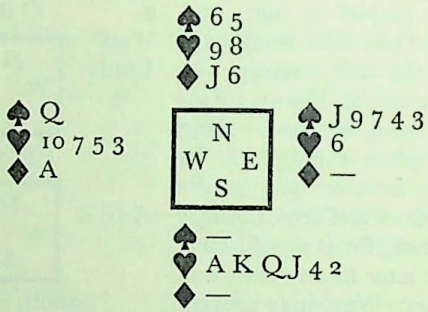
1. ♠ 7 2
♠ Q 9 5 4 — N / W E / S — ♠ 8
♠ A K J 10 6 3

2. ♠ 8 7
♠ K 2 — N / W E / S — ♠ J 10 9
♠ A Q 6 5 4 3

In Figure 1 East leads a suit in which both South and West are void. South ruffs with the ♠ 10. West should not over-ruff. His

♠ Queen will never win but one trick, but he needs it in his hand as a guard to the ♠ 9. If West over-ruffs, South later draws his remaining trumps with the ♠ A K J; if West discards and saves all four spades he will later win two tricks. In Figure 2 spades are trumps and again East leads a suit in which both South and West are void. South ruffs with the ♠ 3. To many players it seems a shame to waste a King on a three but nevertheless West should over-ruff. There is no card in his hand which the King will serve to guard, and he may as well win a trick with it now as later. If West does not over-ruff South leads the Ace and a low spade and later clears the suit with the Queen. If West over-ruffs, East will win a trick later and the total trump tricks for East and West will be two instead of one.

Ruffing with a high trump may force declarer to over-ruff with one of his own high trumps at the cost of a trick.



This example shows how a seemingly impregnable trump suit can be destroyed by a forced high over-ruff. South has plenty of trumps to draw West's supply. But it is West's lead and he leads the Ace of diamonds. It is a high card but East nevertheless ruffs with the ♥ 6. To over-ruff South must use one of his honours and now West's ten is sufficiently guarded and wins a trick.

In this case West had no choice but to lead the ♦ Ace and it took considerable perspicacity on East's part to ruff it. In such positions whenever possible a player who wishes his partner to ruff high should lead a low card so that his partner will not be tempted to discard.

CULBERTSON SYSTEM OF LEADS

OPENING LEADS

AGAINST TRUMP CONTRACTS

Classified in Order of Preference

1 A-K-Q, A-K-J, A-K-x-x-x *in suits of not more than 6 cards.*
2 A or A-K *alone, with* sure *entry to Partner's hand and at least one ruffer.*
3 K-Q-J-x
4 A-x, K *or singletons*[1] *of Partner's suit.*
5 A trump *when bidding indicates possible ruffs in Dummy.*
6 Singleton *when holding immediate trump entry and at least one ruffer.*
7 Q-J-10-x
8 Partner's suit, *with 4 or less.*
9 Q-J-10
10 J-10-9-x
11 A-K-x-x or A-K-x[2]
12 K-Q-J *alone or* K-Q-J-x-x *or more.*
13 K-Q-10 *with or without others.*
14 J-10-9 *alone.*
15 Doubleton *containing no honour.*
16 Singleton *with 3 or more ruffers.*
17 A-x *with trump entry or when Partner has made strong bids.*
18 A or A-K *alone.*
19 10-9-8-x
20 J-10-8-x
21 Trump x-x-x, x-x, A-x-x, K-x-x—*not a singleton.*
22 *A suit headed by a tenace but which your Partner has supported.*[3]
23 J-10 or Q-J *alone*
24 A-x-x—*underlead A-x-x, A-x-x-x when bidding indicates that Dummy has a strong hand with balanced distribution.*
25 10-9-7-x
26 Q-J-9-x
27 J-10-x-x
28 K-x-x-x-(x)
29 Q-x-x-x-(x)
30 10-x-x-x-(x)
31 J-x-x-x-(x)
32 x-x-x-x
33 x-x-x

(*Cont. on next page*)

Opening Leads (*cont.*)

34 A-x-x-x-x *or more.*
35 K-Q-x-x-x
36 Q-J-x-x-(x)[4]
37 Q-J-x
38 Q-10-x
39 K-x-x
40 10-x-x

Notes

1 A singleton of Partner's suit should not be led except when the object is to get a ruff.

2 A-K-x is often not so good as other leads ranked below it in this classification.

3 A suit headed by A-Q or A-J should usually not be opened, despite Partner's support, except to play the Force game.

4 When the bidding indicates the Dummy may hold a doubleton, lead the Queen.

LEADS TO BE AVOIDED

(*Except as Inferential Leads*)

A-Q or A-Q-J
Singleton trump
Q-x-x or J-x-x
Q-x or J-x
A-x (*except as in case* 17)
K-J-x or K-J-10-x
A-J-x or A-J-10
K-Q-x or K-Q-x-x
K-x
K *alone*

OPENING LEADS

Against No-trump Contracts

Classified in Order of Preference

The **CARD** to lead is in bold type.

1 An established suit (*lead the Ace*).
2 A-K-J-x-x-x-x *or better.*
3 A-K-Q-10-x, A-K-Q-x-x*, A-K-Q-x.
4 A-K-x-x-x, A-Q-x-x-x, A-J-x-x-x.
5 A-Q-J-x-(x-x-x), K-Q-J-x-(x-x-x).
6 Q-J-10-x, K-Q-10-x, Q-J-9-x-x (*or more*).
7 K-Q-x-x-x-(x), K-Q-x-x-x-x-x, Q-J-x-x-x-x-x.
8 Any six-card suit *with a reasonably sure entry.***
9 Any five-card suit to Queen or better *with a reasonably sure entry.***
10 J-10-9-x-(x), x-x-x-x-x *with two probable entries.*
11 x-x-x, 10-x-x, J-10-x.
12 x-x, J-10, 10-x.
13 A four-card suit headed by *two* honours (*lead fourth best*).
14 Q-J-x, K-Q-x, A-K-x.
15 x-x-x-x.

AVOID THE FOLLOWING LEADS

In the order named

(Except when made as a gambling *desperation lead*, if the only chance seems to be finding length in that suit, and an entry, in Partner's hand).

1 Doubleton honour leads.
2 Three-card suits headed by one high honour, or two honours not in sequence.
3 Four-card suits headed by only the Ace, King or Queen.
4 Worthless four- or five-card suits with an entryless hand.

* When the opponents can be assumed to have a stopper (J-x-x-x) and when partner probably has an entry, open fourth best with no side entry of your own.

** An Ace, a King, or a thrice guarded Queen of a suit bid by the de clareris considered a resonably certain entry—also any sure stopper in a suit which the opponents must obviously establish to fulfil their contract.

THE LAWS OF CONTRACT BRIDGE

The laws of Contract Bridge, known as the 'International Code' because of their adoption by the Portland Club of London, the Whist Club of New York and the Commission Française du Bridge of Paris, are reprinted complete in the following pages. These laws are copyrighted by the Whist Club and are reprinted by permission.

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THE SCOPE OF THE LAWS

The Laws are designed to define correct procedure and to provide an adequate remedy in all cases where a player accidentally,

carelessly or inadvertently disturbs the proper course of the game, or gains an unintentional but nevertheless unfair advantage.

The object of the Proprieties is to enlighten players who in many cases fail to appreciate when or how they are improperly conveying information to their partners—often a far more reprehensible offence than a mere unintentional violation of a law.

The laws are not designed to prevent dishonourable practices,[1] and there are no penalties to cover either intentional violations of the laws or infringements of the proprieties. When no penalty is prescribed the moral obligation of compliance is strongest. Ostracism is the ultimate remedy where intentional offences are repeated. Penalties are moderated to a minimum consistent with justice, and an offending player should be ready to pay a prescribed penalty graciously. Although the word 'may' is used in connection with the application of certain penalties, harmony and the interests of the game are best served by a uniform enforcement.

Occasionally complex and difficult situations may arise which cannot appropriately be adjudicated under these laws. In such instances the players should determine and follow the fairest procedure, in view of the facts of the particular case.[2]

When these principles are appreciated, arguments are avoided and the pleasure which the game offers is materially enhanced.

In order properly to master and readily to find the various Laws and Properties, players should consider the game divided, as are these laws, into five separate and distinct time periods:

First Period—Preliminaries to the Rubber;

Second Period—The Shuffle, the Cut of the Pack, the Deal;

Third Period—The Auction;

Fourth Period—The Play;

Fifth Period—The Score.

The last four periods recur in chronological sequence as each hand of a rubber is Dealt, Bid, Played and Scored. The Laws and Proprieties of each period are complete in themselves and form a unit separate from and wholly independent of those of any other

[1] Examples of dishonourable practice: using an undisclosed or secret convention; deliberately infringing any Law, even when prepared to pay the penalty, i.e. making a second revoke to conceal one that has been made accidentally.

[2] Example: should an irregularity be clearly attributable to an opponent's mistake or mis-statement, no penalty should be claimed —for instance, a lead out of turn caused by an opponent's mis-statement.

period. When consulting them as to a specific point of offence, refer only to the period during which the question at issue arose.

DEFINITIONS

Defined words are printed in italics in the laws when familiarity with the definition is necessary for a complete understanding of the text.

TABLE—A comprehensive term, including the members entitled to play the game at each table provided for the purpose.

MEMBER—A candidate who has acquired title to play at a table either immediately or in his turn.

PLAYER—One of the four members entitled to play at a table. 'Declarer's Partner' does not rank as a player.

PARTNER—The player who occupies the alternate seat at the table and with whom one plays as a side against the other two.

ROTATION—The order or succession of the game, which is from player to player to the left, in the direction taken by the hands of a watch.

DEAL—The distribution of the cards in rotation to the players.

CALL—A comprehensive term applicable to a bid, a double, a redouble or a pass.

DENOMINATION—The suit or no-trump named in a bid.

ODD TRICK—Each trick, in excess of six, won by a side.

BID—A call by which a player offers to contract that his side will win at least as many odd tricks as he specifies, provided that the hand is played in the denomination he names, and that his side becomes the contracting side.

DOUBLE—A call which, when properly made, has the effect of increasing certain of the points to be won or lost in the event of the last preceding bid becoming the contract.

REDOUBLE—A call which, if no bid intervenes, has the effect of doubling the points increased by an opponent's double.

INSUFFICIENT BID—A bid of a number of tricks fewer than necessary to overcall the previous bid.

DEFENDER—An opponent of declarer.

COMPLETED TRICK—Four cards, one played from each hand, in one round of play.

LEAD—The play of the opening card of a trick.

TO FOLLOW SUIT—To play a card of the suit led.

REVOKE—Failure to play as required by or under the laws of the Play Period, when able to do so.

QUITTED TRICK—A turned trick from which the hand of a player of the side winning it has been removed.

OVERTRICK—Each odd trick won by declarer in excess of his contract.

UNDERTRICK—Each trick by which declarer falls short of his contract.

HONOUR—The Ace, King, Queen, Jack or ten of a trump suit, or each of the four Aces at no-trump.

SLAMS—Grand slam—the winning of thirteen tricks by one side; little slam—the winning of twelve tricks by one side.

TRICK SCORE—The score which counts both towards the winning of a game and the winning of a rubber.

PREMIUM SCORE—The score which counts towards the winning of a rubber but not towards the winning of a game.

VULNERABLE—Exposed to higher penalties for unfulfilled contracts. The term is applied to a side which has won a game.

THE RUBBER—The succession of hands ending when one side has won two games.

DEFINITIONS INCLUDED IN THE LAWS: PASS, law 18; DECLARER, law 19; MISNOMER, law 22; PLAYED CARD, law 26, section 3; PENALTY CARD, law 32.

FIRST PERIOD

PRELIMINARIES TO THE RUBBER

1. CARDS

Each *deal* is made with a pack of fifty-two cards[1] divided into four suits, Spades, Hearts, Diamonds and Clubs, ranking downwards in this order. The cards of each suit rank downward in the order, Ace highest, King, Queen, Jack, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 and 2 lowest.

2. DRAWING CARDS

When cards are to be drawn, one shuffled pack is spread face down on the table and each person entitled to do so draws a card. If anyone exposes more than one card or draws one of the four cards at either end of the pack, he must draw again. If equal cards are drawn, they rank downward in the order—Spade, Heart, Diamond, Club.

A drawn card should not be exposed until all those entitled to draw have drawn cards.

3. THE ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

When precedence is to be established between candidates, those who have not played, in their order of entry into the room, take precedence over those who have played. Those with equal rights

[1] When practicable, two distinguishing packs should be used alternately.

draw cards, the drawer of the higher ranking card obtaining precedence.

4. COMPLEMENT OF TABLE

A *table* has four, five or six *members*; one with six members is complete.

5. ESTABLISHING MEMBERSHIP IN A TABLE

Any candidate may, by announcing his intention, join an incomplete *table*, unless candidates in excess of the number required to complete a table announce their intention to join at the same time. In the latter case precedence is established to determine title to membership.

6. SELECTION AND SEATING OF PLAYERS

No candidate can acquire title to play in a *rubber* unless he has joined a *table* before a card is duly drawn for the selection of players or *partners*.

Before the first *rubber* when there are more than four *members*, precedence is established to determine title to play in the first rubber.

Before each *rubber*, the four *members* who are to play draw cards. The two with the highest ranking cards play as *partners* against the other two; the one with the highest ranking card *deals* first and has the right to choose his seat and the pack with which he will deal. He may consult his partner but, having announced his decision, must abide by it.

After each *rubber* place must be made, for any *member* who did not play in the last rubber and who has acquired title to play in the next rubber, by the member who has played the greater number of consecutive rubbers at that table. Members who have played an equal number of rubbers draw cards, the one with the lower ranking card making place.

7. LEAVING AN EXISTING TABLE TO JOIN ANOTHER TABLE[1]

No one can be a *member* of more than one table at the same time, unless a member consents, on request, to make a fourth at another table and announces his intention of returning to his former table

[1] If a member of an existing table joins another table on his own initiative; if it is a newly formed table, he ranks last in title to play the first rubber; if it is not a newly formed table, he must draw cards for title to play in the next rubber with the member who would otherwise have had title to play.

as soon as his place can be filled. If he does not so announce his intention, he forfeits his membership at his former table.

If a *member* breaks up a table by leaving it with less than four members, he shall not be entitled to compete against the other three for entry into any other *table*.

SECOND PERIOD

THE SHUFFLE, THE CUT OF THE PACK, THE DEAL

The period ending when the last card of a correct deal has been placed on the table.

8. CALLING FOR FRESH CARDS

A player, before the pack has been cut for a deal, may call for fresh cards. Unless damaged cards have to be replaced, he must provide two new packs of which his opponents shall have the choice.

9. SHUFFLING

After the players have drawn for partners and assumed their respective seats, the player on the dealer's left shuffles the pack which the dealer has chosen.

During each deal the dealer's partner should collect the other cards, shuffle them and place them, as a pack, face down on his right, i.e., on the left of the player who will deal next. This pack must remain there until the next dealer takes it up for his deal.

The pack must be shuffled thoroughly in view of all players and so as not to show the face of a card.

If he desires to do so, each player may shuffle once, the dealer last.

If the above requirements have not been fully complied with, any player before the deal starts may demand a new shuffle.

10. CUTTING THE PACK

The dealer presents the pack to the player on his right who lifts off a portion from the top and places it towards the dealer beside the bottom portion. The dealer then completes the cut by placing the bottom portion uppermost.

11. NEW SHUFFLE AND CUT OF THE PACK

Upon the request of a player, made before the beginning of the deal, there must be a new shuffle and cut if:

(*a*) the cut is not made by the proper player;

(*b*) the cut leaves fewer than four cards in either portion;

(*c*) the face of a card is shown in cutting;

(*d*) a player other than the dealer completes the cut;

(*e*) there is doubt as to the exact place in which the pack was divided, or as to which was the top portion;

(*f*) a player shuffles the cards after the cut; or

(*g*) the cut is made before the play of the preceding hand has been completed.

12. DEALING

Players *deal* in *rotation.*

The dealer must deal the fifty-two cards face down, one at a time in *rotation* into four hands, the first card to the player on his left, the last card to himself and thirteen cards to each player. If he deals two cards simultaneously or consecutively to the same hand, he may rectify the error before dealing another card.

13. NEW DEAL DURING THE DEAL

There must be a new deal by the same dealer with the same or a correct pack if it is ascertained during the deal that:

(*a*) the cards have not been dealt as provided in the preceding law;

(*b*) a player has seen and can name a card dealt to another player; or

(*c*) a player has looked at a card dealt to him.

14. DEALING OUT OF ROTATION OR WITH WRONG OR UNCUT PACK

A player *dealing* out of *rotation*, or with the opponent's or an uncut pack, may be stopped before the last card is dealt; otherwise the deal stands as a correct deal made in rotation, and the packs, if changed, remain changed.

PROPRIETIES

Avoid when dealing:

Looking at the bottom card;

Tilting a card upwards or otherwise allowing one to be seen (see law 13 (*b*)). This may cast upon another player a duty which it is not desirable to impose upon him.

THIRD PERIOD

THE AUCTION

The period beginning when the last card of a correct deal has been placed on the table and ending when a call made by one player has been passed in rotation by the other three.

15. THE AUCTION AND ITS DURATION

After the deal is completed, each player in rotation, commencing

with the dealer, must *bid* or pass until the first bid is made. If all four players pass in the first round of the auction, that deal is abandoned and the deal passes in *rotation*. Otherwise, following the first bid, each player in rotation must make a *call* until three players pass successively, at which time the auction closes.

16. BIDDING AND OVERBIDDING

Each successive *bid* must either name a greater number of *odd* tricks than the last preceding bid or an equal number of a higher *denomination*. The bids of different denomination rank upward as follows—Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, Spades, No-trump.

17. DOUBLING AND REDOUBLING

Any player may in *rotation double* the last preceding *bid*, if made by an opponent, or may *redouble* it, if it has been doubled by an opponent. Doubling and redoubling do not affect the number of tricks in the bid or its value for the purpose of the auction.

A bid which has been redoubled may not again be doubled or redoubled.

When a bid has been doubled, or doubled and redoubled, a player may in rotation make a further bid until the auction closes.

18. PASSING

A player who does not desire to *bid*, *double* or *redouble* must so signify by passing.

19. THE FINAL BID AND THE DECLARER

The final *bid* in the auction becomes the contract. If the contract is in a suit, each card of that suit becomes a trump. The player who, for the side which made the final bid, first bid the *denomination* named in the contract, becomes the declarer; his partner ceases to be a player and becomes declarer's partner.

20. INFORMATION AS TO CALLS MADE

During the auction a player may ask to have previous *calls* restated only when it is his turn to call. (See law 25, section 1.)

21. CLAIMING A PENALTY DURING THE AUCTION

1. When an irregularity is committed, any player may draw attention to it, ask his partner whether he knows his rights, and give or obtain information as to the law covering it.

2. All questions as to what penalty applies to a given offence must be settled prior to the actual payment of a penalty or the taking of other action. A penalty once paid or action once taken

stands, even though at some later time it is discovered to have been incorrect.

3. When a player has an option in enforcing a penalty, if the partners consult as to the advantage to be gained by exercising the option or as to which of alternative options to exercise, or if the unauthorized partner exercises it; the right to enforce the optional part of the penalty lapses.

22. IMPROPER CALLS

MISNOMER OR SLIP OF THE TONGUE

1. A player may correct a misnomer without penalty, but this privilege may not be used to cover the correction of a mistake or a change of mind in making a call. Any question which arises as to whether a call ranks as a misnomer depends upon the facts of the particular case and should be decided at the time by the other players.

IMPROPER CALL OVERCALLED BY OPPONENT

2. If an improper *call* is overcalled in *rotation* before the non-offending side draws attention to the irregularity, the auction proceeds as if the improper call had been a proper call made in rotation.

INSUFFICIENT BID

3. Unless overcalled (as provided in section 2) an *insufficient bid* made in *rotation* must be made sufficient in the same or in another *denomination* (see section 6 (*c*)) and if the offender selects—

(*a*) the lowest sufficient bid of the same denomination, his partner must pass when next it is his turn to *call*;

(*b*) another bid, his partner must pass whenever it is his turn to call.

USING INCORRECT NOMENCLATURE WHEN DOUBLING

4. Unless overcalled (as provided in section 2) a player, who in *doubling* or *redoubling* in rotation, names an incorrect number of tricks or a wrong *denomination*, is deemed to have doubled or redoubled the *bid* as made, and his partner must pass when next it is his turn to *call*.

CALL OUT OF ROTATION

5. Unless overcalled (as provided in section 2), a proper *call* made out of *rotation* is cancelled, the auction reverts to the player whose turn it was to call, and, if it was:

(*a*) a pass made before the first *bid*, the offender must pass when next it is his turn to call;

(*b*) another call, the offender's partner must pass whenever it is his turn to call.

INFREQUENT IMPROPER CALLS

6. Unless overcalled (as provided in section 2) if a player:

(*a*) doubles or redoubles a bid which his partner has doubled or redoubled; the offender is deemed to have passed, his side must pass whenever it is its turn to call, and the opponent on the offender's left may cancel the double or redouble of the offender's partner;

(*b*) doubles his partner's bid, or redoubles it when it has not been doubled; the offender is deemed to have passed, and his side must pass whenever it is its turn to call;

(*c*) bids more than seven either inadvertently or in order to make his bid sufficient, bids, doubles or redoubles when required to pass in accordance with a penalty imposed under this law, or makes a call neither recognized nor dealt with in the laws of this period; his side must pass whenever it is its turn to call, and the opponent who first *bid* the *denomination* last bid by his side, or if neither opponent has *bid* the opponent on the offender's left, may cancel the improper call.

23. CARD FACED, SEEN OR DISCLOSED

If, during the Auction Period, a player faces a card on the table, sees the face of a card belonging to his partner, or makes a remark which discloses a card in his hand to his partner; such card or cards must be placed face up on the table during the auction,[1] and:

(*a*) If the owner becomes a defender, declarer may either prohibit the opening lead from being made in the suit of such card or cards, or treat such card or cards as penalty cards (law 32); and

(*b*) if such card is of honour rank or if there are two or more such cards, the owner's partner must also pass whenever it is his turn to call.

24. NEW DEAL DURING THE AUCTION PERIOD

PICKING UP ANOTHER PLAYER'S HAND; PACK FOUND IMPERFECT

1. There must be a new deal by the same dealer with the same or a correct pack if, when the deal is completed, a player picks up another player's hand and looks at it; or if it is ascertained, that one player holds more than the proper number of cards and another less, that the number of cards in the pack is incorrect, or that a duplication exists.

INCOMPLETE HAND

2. There must be a new deal by the same dealer with the same

[1] Unless such card becomes a penalty card it may be picked up when the auction is closed.

or a correct pack if it is ascertained that one player has less and no player more than the proper number of cards and that after due search, which must be made, either the missing card cannot be found, or is found in such position that the players decide that it was not duly dealt to the deficient hand. If a missing card is found in the other pack, or in such position that the players decide that it was duly dealt to the deficient hand, it shall be restored without penalty unless the partner sees its face, in which case it becomes subject to law 23.

PROPRIETIES

Avoid—

In making a call, any undue delay which may result in conveying improper information to partner;

Varying the formulæ used in calling;[1]

An unnecessary request for a review of calls already made;

Giving by word, manner or gesture an indication of the nature of the hand held;

Any remark, question or gesture from which an inference may be drawn;

Indicating in any way approval or disapproval of partner's call; Allowing partner's hesitation, remark or manner to influence a call;

Volunteering information which should only be given in reply to a question.

It is particularly reprehensible to:

Call with special emphasis, inflection or intonation;

Pass or double with exceptional haste or reluctance;

Attract attention to the score, except when necessary to do so for one's own information;

Give unauthorized information as to any incident of the auction.

It is improper to use in calling a convention the significance of which has not been announced. The term 'convention' covers a call designed to convey an arbitrary or artificial meaning, or used by a player with the assurance that his partner will not accept it in its natural sense. Such a call is not subject to penalty under law 23. It is necessary that a 'convention' so used should be fully understood by the other side, and players using 'convention' calls should be ready to reply fully to a proper inquiry by an opponent as to their meaning or use. Should it be necessary to make such an

[1] The recommended calling formulæ are: 'Pass' (avoid 'I' or 'no bid'); '1 heart' (avoid 'I bid'); '1 no-trump' (avoid 'without' or 'without a trump'); 'double' (avoid stating the number of tricks or the denomination doubled); '6 spades' (avoid 'little slam').

inquiry during the auction, the partner of the player who has made the 'convention' call should reply.[1]

The Committee of any Association, Tournament or Club, or groups of persons playing Contract Bridge, may prohibit 'convention' calling as above or restrict the calling to such permissible 'conventions' as they may decide.

It is not wrong to warn partner against infringing a law of the game, for example, against calling out of turn.

Bystanders or members not playing should refrain from making any remark during the auction. They should not call attention to any irregularity or mistake or speak on any question of fact or law, except when requested to give an opinion.

FOURTH PERIOD

THE PLAY

The period beginning when a bid, double or redouble has been passed in rotation by the other three players, and ending when the number of tricks won by each side has been duly determined.

25. CALLS

REVIEWING THE CALLING

1. Before the opening *lead* has been duly made, a *player* may ask to have previous *calls* restated (see law 20). Subsequently a player may ask only what the contract is and whether but not by whom it was doubled or redoubled.

CALL DURING THE PLAY PERIOD

2. If a *defender* makes a call other than a pass after the auction is closed, declarer may require the other defender to lead a specified suit when next it is his turn to lead (law 26, section 5).

26. LEADS AND PLAYS

OPENING LEAD AND THE FACED HAND

1. When the auction is closed, the *defender* on declarer's left makes the opening *lead*. Declarer's partner then spreads his cards face up in front of him on the table, and declarer plays both his own hand and that of his partner.

SUBSEQUENT PLAY AND LEADS

2. After a *lead*, a card is played from each hand in *rotation* and the four cards thus played constitute a *completed trick*.

The leader may lead any card. The other three hands must

[1] The maker of the call may be requested to leave the table while the answer is given.

follow suit if they can, but if unable to *follow suit* may play any card. The obligation to follow suit overrides all other requirements of the laws of this period.

A trick containing a trump or trumps is won by the hand playing the highest trump. A trick containing no trump is won by the hand playing the highest card of the suit led.

The hand winning a trick leads to the next trick.

PLAYED CARD

3. A card is played:

(*a*) by declarer; from his own hand when it touches the table, after being detached from his remaining cards with apparent intent to play; from the faced hand when he touches it, unless for a purpose other than play, either manifest or mentioned by him;

(*b*) by a *defender*, when his partner sees its face, after being detached from his hand with apparent intent to play; and

(*c*) by declarer or a defender, when named by him as the one he proposes to play.

TAKING BACK PLAYED CARD

4. A player may not, on his own initiative, withdraw his played card except to correct a revoke (law 27, section 1).

If, when calling a penalty, a played card is duly withdrawn by specific or implied direction, it may be picked up unless it becomes a penalty card.

PLAYER UNABLE TO PLAY AS REQUIRED

5. If a *player* is unable to play as required to comply with a penalty, he may play any card subject to his obligation to follow suit, and the penalty lapses except that, in the case of a penalty card, the penalty lapses as to the current trick only (law 32).

LEAD OUT OF TURN

6. A *lead* out of turn (see section 4) may be treated as a correct *lead*, and must be treated as such if, before the card wrongly led is withdrawn, a card is played to it by the other side.

In all other cases, if a *lead* out of turn is made (see the two preceding sections):

(*a*) by declarer from either hand; either *defender* may require him to take the *lead* back, and, if he has led from the wrong hand, he must lead a card of the same suit from the correct hand;

(*b*) by a *defender*,[1] declarer may either treat the card led out of

[1] In the case of an opening lead by the wrong defender, should any of declarer's partner's cards be exposed after the out-of-turn lead and before declarer names the suit to be led, he may only treat the card led out of turn as a penalty card.

turn as a penalty card (law 32, section 2), or require the lead of a specified suit, from the other defender if he won the previous trick, otherwise from the defender who next wins a trick.

SIMULTANEOUS LEAD BY DEFENDERS

7. If the *defenders* lead simultaneously the correct lead stands and the card wrongly played becomes a penalty card (law 32, section 2).

PREMATURE PLAY BY A DEFENDER

8. If a *defender* plays to a trick when it is his partner's turn to play;[1] declarer, unless he has played from both hands, may require the other defender to play his highest or lowest card in the suit led and, should he be unable to follow suit, to play a specified suit (see section 5).

PREMATURE LEAD BY A DEFENDER

9. If a *defender* leads to the next trick before his partner has played to the current trick; declarer may require the other defender to play to the current trick his highest or lowest card in the suit led and, should he be unable to follow suit, to play a specified suit (see section 5). The offender, should he not win the current trick, has led out of turn to the next trick.

PLAYING BEFORE PENALTY HAS BEEN NAMED

10. If any player when subject to a *lead* or play penalty plays before the penalty has been named or exacted, the right to enforce the penalty is not affected thereby (see sections 3 and 4). Declarer may treat a card so prematurely played by a defender as a penalty card (law 32, section 2). If, in the above case, the non-offending side plays after the offender and before naming or exacting the penalty the right to enforce any penalty lapses.

27. THE REVOKE

CORRECTED REVOKE

1. If a player *revokes* and corrects his error by withdrawing the revoke card before the revoke becomes established, he must substitute a correct card, and if the revoke card belongs to:

(*a*) a *defender*; declarer may treat it as a penalty card (law 32, section 2), or require him to play his highest or lowest correct card;[2]

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[1] A defender who shows his last card to his partner before the latter has played to the twelfth trick, is deemed to have played 'to a trick when it is his partner's turn to play'.

[2] This penalty may not be enforced if a defender's hand, when he revoked, was faced in consequence of declarer's trick claim (law 29).

(*b*) declarer; it may be taken up, and, if the defender on declarer's left has played to the trick after declarer, he may require declarer to play his highest or lowest correct card;

(*c*) declarer's partner; it is put back without penalty.

A card played by a player of the non-offending side after a revoke and before its correction may be taken back.

ACTS WHICH ESTABLISH A REVOKE

2. A revoke, other than one made in leading becomes established when the offending side leads or plays to the next trick except that such a revoke made in the twelfth trick never becomes established. A revoke made in leading becomes established when the offender's partner plays to the revoke trick.

INQUIRIES REGARDING A POSSIBLE REVOKE

3. A *player* may ask whether a play constitutes a revoke and may demand that an opponent correct his revoke but nothing can alter or postpone the provisions of the previous section.

Declarer's partner may question only declarer, and, if he does so after intentionally looking at a card in a player's hand, declarer may not withdraw his card.

ESTABLISHED REVOKE

4. When a revoke has been established the trick stands as played; and, if the revoke is claimed, tricks won in play by the revoking side after its first revoke[1] (including the revoke trick) are transferred to the non-offending side at the end of play—two such tricks for a side's first revoke and one such trick for each subsequent revoke by the same side; except that no tricks are transferred:

(*a*) if the revoke was made from a hand legally faced at the time (law 26, section 1, and law 29, section 1); or

(*b*) if the revoke is claimed or attention drawn to it after the cut for the next deal is completed or, if the revoke occurs in the last hand of a rubber, after the rubber score is agreed.

SCORING TRANSFERRED TRICKS

5. A transferred trick ranks for all scoring purposes as a trick won in play by the side receiving it.

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[1] In certain cases when a trick, in which an established revoke occurred, has been won by the non-offending side, inexperienced players may have difficulty in determining the sequence of tricks. In such a case the decision of a majority of the players, as to the number of tricks transferable, shall govern; failing such decision the number shall be determined by the non-offending side.

SETTLING A REVOKE CLAIM

6. The tricks and unplayed cards may be inspected at the end of play to settle a revoke claim, and, if, after such claim, an opponent so mixes the cards that the claim cannot be established, it must be allowed.

28. TRICKS

INFORMATION AS TO CARDS PLAYED

1. Until a trick has been *quitted*, a player may require the players to specify which cards have been played from their respective hands.

GATHERING TRICKS

2. Each completed trick must be gathered and turned face down on the table by a *player* of the side winning it. The cards of each *quitted trick* should be kept together so that its identity can be readily established, and the tricks taken by a side should be arranged together in such manner that their number and sequence is apparent.

INSPECTING QUITTED TRICK

3. If a *quitted trick* is looked at before the end of the hand, the opponents score 50 points in their premium score unless:

(*a*) there is difference of opinion as to which hand won it;

(*b*) it is found to contain an incorrect number of cards; or

(*c*) it is necessary to turn it in order to substitute a correct card (law 27, section 1).

TRICK APPROPRIATED BY THE WRONG SIDE

4. A trick, appropriated in error by the side which did not win it, should be conceded or may be claimed subject to law 38, section 1.

DIRECTING PARTNER'S ATTENTION TO A TRICK

5. If a player's attention, before he has played and without a request by him, is directed to the current trick in any way by his partner, as by saying it is his, by naming his card, or drawing the cards towards him; declarer or the defender on the left of declarer's partner, as the case may be, may require the offender's partner (law 26, section 5) to play the highest or lowest card which he holds in the suit led and, should he be unable to follow suit, to play a specified suit.

29. HANDS NOT PLAYED OUT

CLAIM OR CONCESSION OF TRICKS BY DECLARER

1. If declarer claims or concedes one or more of the remaining tricks or so implies by showing his hand or otherwise; he must leave

his hand face up on the table, and forthwith make a comprehensive statement[1] of how he intends to play the remaining tricks, specifying the order in which he intends to play his cards and the disposition of each card from each of his two hands.

Either defender may demand such a statement or may require declarer to play on. Declarer may neither take any finesse[2] unannounced at the time of such claim or concession nor depart from any statement he may have made.

Declarer may not treat cards shown in consequence of his claim or concession as penalty cards.

If both defenders have abandoned their hands, declarer's claim or concession must be allowed. An exposure of cards does not constitute an abandonment.

CLAIM OR CONCESSION OF TRICKS BY A DEFENDER

2. A defender may show any of his cards to declarer for the purpose of claiming or conceding one or more of the remaining tricks. A concession of tricks by a defender is not valid unless the other defender accedes.[3]

TRICKS CONCEDED IN ERROR

3. If a side concedes a trick which it could not lose by any play of the cards, such concession is void (see law 38, section 1).

30. DECLARER'S PARTNER

1. Declarer's partner forfeits all his rights by intentionally looking at the face of a card in a player's hand. Thereafter he must remain silent in regard to an incident connected with the hand, and, if, after a defender has committed an irregularity, he fails to do so; declarer may not enforce any penalty for the offence.

2. If declarer's partner has not intentionally looked at the face of a card in a player's hand, he may:

(*a*) reply to a player's proper question;

(*b*) when requested, discuss questions of fact or law;

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[1] Any statement in regard to an intended play, as provided in law 26, section 3 (*c*), established a revoke to the previous trick.

[2] Finesse—in this case, the play of a card by declarer from either hand which might enable the defender, who for his side plays last, to win a trick with a card lower in rank than one belonging to the opponent on his right.

[3] Under law 32, section 1, any card seen by a defender while his partner is showing it to declarer, or any card placed face up on the table or named by a defender for the purpose of claiming or conceding tricks, becomes a penalty card.

(*c*) question declarer regarding his possible revoke (see law 27, section 3); and

(*d*) draw attention to a defender's irregularity and ask declarer whether he knows his rights.

Declarer's partner has no rights other than the above conditional ones. He does not rank as a player.

3. If declarer's partner, by touching a card or otherwise, suggests the play of a card; the defender on his left may require declarer to play or not to play that card, unless such play would constitute a revoke.

4. If declarer's partner, on his own initiative, informs declarer which hand has the lead or warns him not to lead from the wrong hand; the defender on the left of declarer's partner may choose the hand from which declarer shall lead.

Note: Other penalties to which declarer's partner is subject for improper action taken by him are prescribed in section 6 of law 27 (Settling a Revoke Claim), in sections 3 and 5 of law 28 (Tricks) and in section 3 of law 31 (Claiming a Penalty).

31. CLAIMING A PENALTY DURING THE PLAY

1. When an irregularity is committed any *player* may draw attention to it, ask his partner whether he knows his rights, and give or obtain information as to the law covering it. (Section 2 of the previous law gives declarer's partner's rights).

2. All questions as to what penalty applies to a given offence must be settled prior to the actual payment of a penalty or the taking of other action. A penalty once paid or action once taken stands, even though it is subsequently discovered to have been incorrect.

3. Unless a penalty is automatic, the right to any penalty lapses, if the partners consult as to which of alternative penalties to claim or as to the advantage to be gained by claiming any penalty, or if an authorized partner claims a penalty. (See law 26, section 10, and law 30, section 1.)

32. PENALTY CARD OF A DEFENDER

1. If during the play a *defender* drops a card face up on the table, sees the face of any of his partner's cards (except as provided in law 29, section 1), makes a remark which discloses any of his cards to his partner, or names any card in his partner's hand; such card becomes a penalty card.[1]

2. A penalty card must be left face up on the table until played,

[1] As provided in law 23; in law 26, sections 6 (*b*), 7, 10; and in law 27, section 1, certain other cards may become penalty cards.

and whenever it is the turn of the defender who owns it to play (subject to his duty to follow suit); if he has but one penalty card, he must play it; if he has two or more penalty cards, declarer may require him to play any one of them.

33. NEW DEAL DURING THE PLAY PERIOD[1]

PACK FOUND IMPERFECT

1. There must be a new deal by the same dealer with the same or a correct pack if it is found that the number of cards in the pack is incorrect or that a duplication exists.

SURPLUS CARD

2. There must be a new deal by the same dealer if one hand has a surplus card and either another has less than the proper number of cards or the surplusage is not due to omission to play to a trick. When the surplusage is due to omission to play to a trick, the offender must forthwith remove a card from the redundant hand, and, if possible, the card must be one which he could properly have played to the defective trick, and, if he has played to a later trick, his side transfers one trick won in play to the non-offending side (law 27, section 5).

INCOMPLETE HAND

3. There must be a new deal by the same dealer if one hand has less and no other more than the proper number of cards and if, after due search which must be made, either the missing card cannot be found, or is found in such position as to show that it was not duly dealt to the deficient hand. In any other event, including the case where the missing card is found in the other pack, it shall be restored to its owner. The owner is subject to the revoke law but may not be penalized more than two tricks for established revokes made with a missing card. If a quitted trick contains more than four cards and there is doubt as to which card was included therein in error, declarer or the defender on the offender's left, as the case may be, may direct which card is to be restored to the deficient hand of the other side.

PROPRIETIES

Avoid:

Carelessly playing out of turn;

Giving by word, manner or gesture an indication of the nature of the hand held;

A remark, question or gesture from which an inference may be drawn;

Indicating approval or disapproval of partner's play;

[1] See law 38, section 2.

Allowing partner's hesitation, remark or manner to influence a play;

An unnecessary request to place the cards played to a trick;

Playing a card with special emphasis;

Undue delay in playing to a trick when the play does not need consideration;

Detaching a card from one's hand before it is one's turn to lead or play; for example, a card held ready by a defender before his partner has played to the current trick may indicate a desire to be left with the lead; and a card held ready by a defender after leading a card may inform his partner that the card led, though not the highest, is a winner, and may be still more informative when the second lead is from a different suit;

Volunteering information which should only be given in reply to a question;

Failing to keep the tricks in correct order and distinct from one another or allowing some to be placed on the opposite side of the table;

When declarer's partner, inspecting declarer's hand after the auction is closed, or leaving the table to watch declarer play the hand, or looking at a card in a defender's hand, or making any unauthorized remark or statement.

It is particularly reprehensible to:

Watch the place in a player's hand from which he draws a card, and to make any inference therefrom.

Call attention to the number of tricks needed to complete or defeat the contract or to the fact that it has already been fulfilled.

Give unauthorized information as to an incident of the auction.

Prepare to gather a trick before all four hands have played to it.

Partners should not employ an unusual convention in play without informing the opponents of its significance.

It is not wrong, except as provided in the case of declarer's partner, to warn one's partner against infringing any law of the game, for example, against leading or playing out of turn. It is not wrong to keep silent in regard to a revoke by one's own side except where it is a revoke made in playing to the twelfth trick.

Bystanders or members not playing should refrain from calling attention to an irregularity or mistake in the play, or to a point of fact or law, except when requested to give an opinion.

FIFTH PERIOD

THE SCORE

The period following the play during which the points made in the hand are scored.

34. POINTS TO BE SCORED

Points, as tabulated in the Scoring Table (inside front cover), are scored in a trick score and in a premium score. A side which fails to make its contract, can score only for honours held in one hand.

35. POINTS WHICH WIN THE GAME

A game is won by the side which, in one or more hands, first scores 100 points for *odd tricks* bid and won; but no *trick score* obtained by either side in any game can count towards winning the next game.

36. RUBBER POINTS

The *rubber* ends when either side has won two games, and the winners of the final game add to their score; 500 points if their opponents have won one game, 700 points if their opponents have not won a game.

Where a *rubber* ends by arrangement before either side has won two games, a side which has won one game adds 300 points to its score.[1]

37. THE RESULT OF THE RUBBER

At the end of the *rubber* the *trick* and *premium score* of each side is added up; the side with the larger total score wins the rubber, irrespective of the number of games, if any, which it has won, and the difference between the two totals represents the number of points won.

38. CORRECTION OF SCORE

1. Proven errors are subject to correction as follows:

(*a*) In trick points, including errors in counting the number of tricks taken, before a call is made in the next hand, or if the error occurs in the final hand of a *rubber*, before the rubber score is agreed;

(*b*) In premium points or in addition or subtraction, before the *rubber* score has been made up and agreed.

2. Scores made as a result of hands played with an imperfect pack are not affected by the discovery of the imperfection after the cut for the next deal is completed or the rubber score is agreed.

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[1] A rubber is deemed to have ended by arrangement if a player is obliged to leave, and no substitute is found acceptable to the other players.

LAWS OF DUPLICATE CONTRACT

The special conditions under which Duplicate Contract Bridge is played require that a special code of laws be used for tournaments and duplicate games. In many cases this special code differs from the laws used in Rubber Contract Bridge. Such modifications and reversals of the Rubber code are summarized in the following pages. Where any essential law is not listed it is the same as in Rubber Bridge.

The laws of the United States Bridge Association, upon which this summary of the differences is based, are official for all duplicate tournaments.[1] These laws were prepared by the National Laws and Rules Committee, of which the members are William E. McKenney, chairman, Waldemar von Zedtwitz, George Reith, Russell J. Baldwin, Captain A. M. Gruenther, Edward Hymes, Jnr., Geoffrey Mott-Smith, secretary, and Albert H. Morehead. The same laws have been adopted and are being used by the American Bridge League, the American Whist League and other organizations.

THE SHUFFLE AND DEAL

Shuffling and dealing may be done by the players at each table immediately before commencement of play, or it may be done in advance under the direction of the tournament committee. If it is done by the players, at least one member of each pair must be present during the shuffling and dealing. The player designated by the tray as dealer shall be responsible for shuffling the deck.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

Bidding and Playing Conventions

(*a*) The tournament or card committee may rule out certain bidding or playing conventions from use at games under its jurisdiction if the conventions have not been widely publicized.

(*b*) A pair employing conventions not generally accepted must at the beginning of each round announce its methods to the opponents. A player must also announce any agreement with his partner regarding special significance of a call or play. If he fails to announce such an agreement and an opponent believes his interests to be damaged thereby, the opponent should apply to the tournament director for a neutral score.

1 See note on page 552

Claim of Penalty

(*a*) When an irregularity occurs, any player may, and either opponent of the offender should, draw attention to it.

(*b*) An irregularity must be reported to the tournament director at once. Even though the matter is settled amicably among the players, they are liable to disciplinary penalty if they fail to report the incident.

(*c*) Any player may refuse to pay a penalty or to agree to rectification of error until so instructed by the tournament director. No claim, payment, or waiver of penalty among the players themselves is binding until ratified by the tournament director.

THE AUCTION PERIOD

The Auction

Commencing with the player designated by the tray as dealer, each player in rotation must make a call. If all four players pass in the first round of the auction, that deal is passed out and so recorded and the hands are returned without play to the correct pockets of the tray from which they are taken. There shall be no new deal in such case.

Condoning an Improper Call

Condonement of an improper call is the act of accepting it as a proper call without penalty. Such acceptance is signified by a following call made by the left-hand opponent of the offender, either before or after attention is drawn to the irregularity (except that a pass by a player who is at his turn barred from the auction does not constitute a condonement). If an improper call is condoned, any attempted change thereof is void without penalty.

Insufficient Bids

(*a*) If a player makes an insufficient bid (over a bid of less than seven-odd) and immediately corrects the error before attention is drawn to it, by substituting the lowest sufficient bid of the same denomination, the first call is void. The player's left-hand opponent may condone the correction, in which case it stands without penalty, or may announce that he will penalize the error. Except in the circumstances described, a player may not voluntarily correct his own insufficient bid.

(*b*) If a player makes an insufficient bid over a bid of seven-odd and immediately corrects his error, before attention is drawn to it, by substituting any correct bid, the correction stands. If attention is drawn before correction, left-hand opponent may condone it or demand its correction. Upon demand for correction, the offender may substitute a sufficient bid or pass.

(*c*) If a side makes an insufficient bid, over a bid of seven-odd, to which attention is drawn, if the offending side becomes defenders, declarer may designate the suit to be led for the opening lead. In addition, if the insufficient bid is not condoned, the partner of the offender is barred from further participation in the auction.

Bid of Eight or More Odd-Tricks

Any bid of eight or more odd-tricks stands as a bid of seven-odd in the same denomination, and if the bid is then insufficient, it is subject to the last-mentioned law. In any event, both members of the offending side are barred from further participation in the auction.

THE PLAY PERIOD

Rights, Duties, and Penalties of Declarer's Partner

(*a*) Declarer's partner may notify the tournament director of any matter in which the legal interests of his side are concerned.

(*b*) If he has not intentionally seen the face of a card in any player's hand, or looked at the travelling score-slip, he may:

(1) Play the cards of dummy as directed by declarer.

(2) Keep count of the tricks won and lost by each side.

(3) Call attention to the fact that any player has turned down in incorrection direction his card played to the last preceding trick.

(*c*) If declarer's partner intentionally sees the face of a card in any player's hand or looks at the travelling score-slip, he may not exercise the foregoing rights and in this event, or if he should seek to exercise other rights not mentioned above or in the Rubber laws, he may be required by either defender to leave the table until play of the deal is completed.

Error in Play from Dummy

(*a*) If declarer designates for play a card that is not in dummy, he must if possible play a card of either the suit or rank named.

(*b*) If declarer designates a card in dummy to be played and his partner plays another, the error must be corrected on demand of any player if it is corrected before a defender plays. Otherwise the card played from dummy stands as regular.

(*c*) If declarer's designation of a card does not clearly identify the card, either defender or declarer's partner may require declarer to name the exact card intended. In this event, declarer is bound by any partial designation he may have made.

Deal Not Played Out

(*a*) If declarer claims the remaining tricks or any number thereof he must place his cards face up on the table, and make a complete statement as to how he intends to play the rest of the hand, specifying the order in which he intends to play his cards and the disposi-

tion of each card in each of his two hands. If declarer fails to make a statement, or if his statement is unsatisfactory to the defenders, or if for any other reason they dispute his claim, they should notify the tournament director immediately. The director shall require declarer to make the statement as required above. Any matter of play then not covered by his statement may be settled as the defenders direct.

Illegal Information During the Play

(*a*) If either defender by word or act improperly locates an unplayed card in his own or his partner's hand, the tournament director may declare a card so located to be a penalty card.

(*b*) If either defender improperly locates an unplayed card in declarer's hand, the tournament director may permit declarer to designate the suit to be led at the first opportunity of the defending side to lead.

(*c*) If declarer's partner improperly locates an unplayed card in the hand of either defender, the tournament director may permit the defender who will play last to the trick to designate the suit to be led at declarer's first opportunity to lead from either hand.

(*d*) If either defender or declarer's partner makes a remark, gesture, or by any other act conveys information as to his intentions or desires in the play of the cards, the tournament director may assess an appropriate penalty such as permitting the non-offending side to call a lead.

(*e*) If in the opinion of the tournament director, the penalty suggested for any case under this law is inadequate, he may instead give neutral score, with or without penalty.

If a player removes from the tray and looks at any hand, unless the tournament director or one of his rightful opponents on the deal is present, the director shall deduct from the final score of the offender 1 match point (in total point play, 100 points).

Scoring Values

In addition to the Rubber Bridge premiums, declarer scores 50 points for a successful part-score contract, 300 for a non-vulnerable game, 500 for a vulnerable game. No points for honours shall be scored in match-point play. No rubber may be completed and there is no rubber bonus.

MATCH POINT SCORING

Match Points in Pair Play

(*a*) The committee shall decide whether each deal or set of deals shall constitute a pair match; or whether a combination of the two methods shall be used.

(*b*) The score of each pair on each match shall be compared only

with scores made on that match by other pairs playing in the same direction.

(*c*) On each match, a pair shall be awarded 1 match point for each pair their score betters, ½ match point for each pair their score ties, and ½ match point for each neutral or other arbitrary score assigned.

Match Points in Individual Play

In individual play, the two players playing as partners shall be considered as a pair for that match, and pair points shall be awarded in the regular manner. Each player shall receive separately the full number of match points awarded to his pair.

Ties

(*a*) In championship individual or pair play, if there is a tie for first place all of the tying contestants shall share title and honours equally. The committee may at its discretion break the tie for purpose of awarding prizes.

(*b*) Method of breaking a tie in any individual or pair play: Considering tying contestants only, award a contestant one point for each deal on which his match-point score is higher than that of the other contestant. If three contestants are tied, the one having the highest match-point score on a given deal receives two points; the intermediate, one point; and the lowest, zero. The tying contestant having the greatest number of points so awarded is the winner.

(*c*) A tie in championship team play shall be broken by the play-off of any number of deals designated by the committee. If the tie still exists, the winners shall be determined by the net total of their plus and minus scores on the play-off deals only.

Neutral Score Penalties

Upon granting a neutral score, the director must ascertain whether it has resulted from a culpable violation of propriety, ethics, or the laws of correct procedure. If circumstantial or direct evidence fixes the blame upon certain pair or pairs, and if the error has required one or more pairs to take neutral score, the director shall penalize the guilty pairs and indemnify the innocent pairs. (Penalties and indemnities need not balance.) It is suggested that the penalty or indemnity to a single pair be not less than 10 per cent nor more than 25 per cent (of the maximum score for the board).

A neutral score consists (in match-point play) of ½ match point for each other pair playing that deal in the same direction, including other pairs who are assigned neutral or other arbitrary match-point scores. In total-point play, a neutral score is the average of all scores made on the deal.

Disciplinary Penalties

The tournament director may penalize a pair or player any number of cumulative or match points for any offence that delays or obstructs the game, inconveniences the other players, impairs his authority, or compels the award of neutral scores. The following penalties are suggested:

(1) For excessive delay that inconveniences other players, 1 point.

(2) For comparing scores or discussing results of play except as permitted, 2 points.

(3) For looking at a quitted trick without permission, ½ point, assessed against the offender and awarded to the opponents.

(4) For failure to comply with any instruction of the committee or the director, 2 points, with repetition of the penalty for continued delay or insubordination.

(5) For passing an incorrect board, 1 point.

(6) For calling attention to vulnerability after the player has looked at his own hand, 1 point or neutral score.

(7) For tardiness in arriving at game (after five minutes of grace): for the first five minutes or fraction thereof, 1 point; for each subsequent five minutes or fraction thereof, 2 match points.

Playing the Wrong Tray

(*a*) If two pairs play a tray or trays other than the one designated for that round, their score on such play is void, and either side not having previously played the deal shall be given neutral score on the deal.

(*b*) The two pairs in question shall play the correct tray or trays against each other. If this be impossible, the director may permit them to take neutral score on the unplayed trays.

Wrong Number of Cards

(*a*) Upon withdrawing his cards from the tray, each player, before looking at the face of any of them, shall count his cards to make sure that he has exactly thirteen. He shall count them again after the completion of the play, just before returning them to the tray.

(*b*) If any player finds that he holds more or less than thirteen cards, the tray shall immediately be returned to the tournament director. The latter shall correct the tray according to the hand records (if they are kept) or by consulting players who have already played the deal.

(*c*) If the error is discovered before any player holding more than thirteen cards has looked at his hand, the tray shall be returned to the proper table after correction, to be played and scored in the regular way.

(*d*) If the error is not discovered until after a player holding more than thirteen cards has looked at his hand, the tray shall be returned to the proper table after correction, but shall not be played. Both pairs at that table shall receive neutral score for that deal and at the end of the round, the tray shall progress in the regular way to be played at subsequent tables.

(*e*) If during the play it is discovered that one player holds fewer than thirteen cards, and the other three hold exactly thirteen, the deal shall be restored to its original form by replacing the missing cards or by substituting a correct deck. The player whose hand was short shall be deemed to have held the card or cards continuously and shall be liable for any revokes resulting therefrom.

Player Looking at the Wrong Hand

(*a*) In an individual or pair game, if a player withdraws and looks at a hand other than the one he properly should hold, the tray shall be placed in such position that he will hold the hand he has seen. The other three players shall take the hands that correspond to their relative positions, and the deal shall be played and scored as regular.

(*b*) If to play a tray as thus described would result in a player's having knowledge of any hand other than the one he would hold, both pairs shall instead take neutral score on the deal.

Scoring a Mixed Deal

If the cards of a tray become mixed or interchanged during play, and two or more tables play it in different form than originally dealt, the procedure shall be as follows:

(1) The tournament director shall determine as accurately as possible exactly which pairs played the deal as originally dealt, and which after the change.

(2) If it cannot be determined which way any certain pair played the deal, they shall be given neutral score.

(3) As among pairs sitting in the same direction and playing the identical deal, each pair shall be awarded 1 match point for each pair beaten and ½ match point for each pair tied.

(4) Each pair shall be awarded ½ match point for each pair sitting in the same direction which did not play the identical deal, or which received neutral score.

Scoring When a Contestant Withdraws

(*a*) When a contestant who has started play withdraws from a contest, if an acceptable substitute is found and continues to play until the end of the contest, all scores made by the original contestant or the substitute shall count.

(*b*) If no acceptable substitute can be found to continue, all

scores made by the original contestant shall count, and the scores on the remaining deals, shall be adjusted as follows:

(1) The number of match points made by the withdrawing contestant on the matches played shall be computed and divided by the number of matches played, thereby determining the average number of points per match.

(2) On the remaining matches, the withdrawing contestant shall be assumed to have maintained the same average and shall be awarded that number of match points on each remaining match.

(3) Each opponent shall be awarded, on the matches to have been played against the withdrawing contestant, the maximum possible number of match points less the number awarded to the withdrawing contestant.

(4) These adjustments shall be made to the nearest half match point except that if a tie results, the scores of the tying contestants shall be computed decimally to break the tie.

TOTAL POINT SCORING

Scoring Limits

(*a*) When a contract has been doubled or redoubled, the losing pair shall score the full amount of loss in all cases.

(*b*) In pair play, the winning pair shall not score more than the prescribed limit on any single deal. If more points are made, only the allowed number shall be credited to the pair's score, and the excess points shall be entered in the score card in a separate space provided for 'excess premiums'.

(1) When a small slam or grand slam contract is either made or defeated—no limit.

(2) When a less-than-slam contract is defeated, regardless of whether declarer's side is vulnerable or not:

Defenders not vulnerable	600 points
Defenders vulnerable	900 points

(3) When a less-than-slam contract is made, whether doubled or redoubled:

Declarer's side not vulnerable	800 points
Declarer's side vulnerable	1000 points

Total Point Pair Scoring

(*a*) At the end of the contest, each pair shall total its plus column and minus column and subtract the lesser total from the greater. The difference is the net score, plus or minus.

(*b*) The North-South pair having the greatest net plus or the smallest net minus shall be declared the winner in the North-South group; the East-West winner shall be similarly determined.

(*c*) If there is a tie among two or more pairs playing in the same

direction, the tying pair having the greatest number of 'excess premium' points shall be declared the winner.

Scoring a Mixed Deal

If the cards of a deal become interchanged during play, and two or more tables play it in form other than as originally dealt, the procedure shall be as follows:

(*a*) The director shall determine as accurately as possible exactly which pairs played the deal in its original form and which after the change.

(*b*) If it cannot be determined which way any certain pair played the deal, that pair shall be awarded zero on it.

(*c*) An average shall be computed on all scores known to have been made on the deal as originally dealt, and a similar average of all scores known to have been made after the change.

(*d*) A pair whose score exceeds the average made by all pairs playing the same deal in the same direction, shall be awarded a plus score of the amount by which its score exceeds the average. A pair whose score is below the average shall be awarded a minus score of corresponding amount.

Penalties in Total Point Play

Where penalties are given in match points or percentages, the following shall be deemed equivalent:

1 match point equivalent to 100 total points; 100 per cent (top on a board) equivalent to 1000 points.

Note (*see page* 548) : Inasmuch as the new official Duplicate laws for England have not yet been published, the laws as adopted by the U.S. Bridge Association are herein used.

THE LAWS OF PROGRESSIVE BRIDGE

LAW No. 1

Arrangement of Tables

The game is played by two or more tables of four players each. The tables are numbered consecutively from Table No. 1 to the highest number.

COMMENT

It is customary to provide each table with two decks of cards having different backs. The tables should be numbered conspicuously for the convenience of the players, and each one should be provided with one or more pencils and a score-pad showing Contract scoring.

LAW No. 2

Tally Cards

Prior to the beginning of play, the game director or committee prepares individual tally cards, one for each player. Each tally card bears a table number and designates a position (North, South, East or West) at the table.

The tally cards may be drawn at random by the players or assigned by the game director, as he prefers. When play is called, each player takes the position assigned by his tally card.

COMMENT

At mixed parties it is customary to arrange the tallies and seat assignments so that a gentleman will always have a lady as a partner and vice versa. This is accomplished by having tallies of two different kinds of colours, one for the ladies and the other for the gentlemen.

LAW No. 3

A Round

A round consists of four deals, one by each player. When all tables are through play, the game director gives a signal and the players move to their positions for the next round according to the type of progression used.

COMMENT

Each round should take about twenty minutes and the average session of play is from six to seven rounds.

LAW No. 4

A Deal Passed Out

Only four hands are dealt at each table, one by each player. If

a deal is passed out (that is, if all four players pass at their first opportunity to declare), the deal passes to the left and both sides score zero for that deal.

LAW No. 5

Method of Progression

At the conclusion of each round, the winning pair at Table No. 1 remain and the losing pair move to the last table. At all tables except Table No. 1, the losers remain and the winners move up one table toward Table No. 1.

COMMENT

The above is the standard method of progression, but this may be waived or altered to suit the wishes of the game director or the players. Special tallies may be arranged or obtained, assigning positions for each round in such a way as to give each player as wide a variety of partners as possible. Another method is to have the ladies progress one way and the gentlemen the other way.

LAW No. 6

Selection of Partners

At mixed parties, it is customary but not essential for a gentleman to play with a lady partner and vice versa. If the standard method of progression is used, the visiting lady at each table becomes the partner of the gentleman who remains.

If the players are all of the same sex, the four players at each table draw cards to determine partners at the start of each round. The two new arrivals at each table draw first, and the one drawing higher has choice of seats and is the first dealer; the one drawing lower sits at the left of the first dealer. The two players who remain at the table from the preceding round then draw, the higher becoming the partner of the dealer. Thus all players change partners after each round.

COMMENT

Since the chief functions of progressive bridge is social, it is preferable to change partners at each round. However, if for some reason a pair contest is desired, the same partnerships may be retained throughout by simply progressing as described in Law No. 5 without changing partners at the next table. Another method is to have the original N-S pairs remain in the same positions throughout the game, and to have the E-W pairs progress one table at a time until they reach Table No. 1, and then go to the last table. In this case, the progression is followed automatically, regardless of which pair wins at each table.

LAW No. 7

Draw for Deal

Unless the dealer is already determined under Law No. 6, the four players at a table draw for first deal. The player who draws highest is the first dealer and may select either deck.

Progressive Bridge Scoring

COMMENT

With the exceptions specifically mentioned below, the scoring for Progressive Bridge is exactly the same as for Duplicate Bridge and will be found explained in the Duplicate Laws. The most important points to remember about the scoring are:

Each deal is scored and recorded separately, and no trick points are carried over from one deal to the next.

Game is 100 points for tricks bid and made in one deal. The game premium is 300 points, if not vulnerable, and 500 points, if vulnerable, and it is allowed only when game is bid and made in one deal.

A premium of 50 points is scored for making any contract less than game. This premium is in addition to the value of the tricks made. Premiums for a small and grand slam are allowed only if bid for.

LAW No. 8

Scoring Limits

A side may not score more than 1000 points in a single deal, except in the case of a slam contract fulfilled.

COMMENT

It is not correct to prohibit doubles or redoubles. The limitation of penalties avoids the necessity of this restriction.

LAW No. 9

Vulnerability

The first deal of each round shall be played and scored as if neither side were vulnerable.

The second and third deals of each round shall be played and scored as if the dealer's side were vulnerable and the other side not vulnerable.

The fourth deal of each round shall be played and scored as if both sides were vulnerable.

COMMENT

This is the most desirable method of determining vulnerability in Progressive Bridge, but if preferred all deals may be played as though neither side were vulnerable, or all deals as though both

sides were vulnerable. In any event, the method should be announced before play starts.

LAW No. 10

Recording the Score

One of the four players at each table is appointed to record the score. He enters the result of each deal on the score pad separately and, at the end of the round, totals all the points made by each side.

He enters on the individual tally of each player the points made by that player's side and also the points made by the opponents.

COMMENT

Correctly designed tallies provide spaces to record both 'My Score' and 'Opponents' Score'. It is important that both be entered on the tally, for otherwise the record would be meaningless.

LAW No. 11

Computing Total Scores

At the conclusion of the game, each player totals his score. He also totals the scores of his opponents, as recorded on his tally, and subtracts his opponents' total from his own. The difference, plus or minus as the case may be, is recorded in the space provided at the bottom of his tally.

COMMENT

Let us suppose that a player scores 2460 points, and the opponents score 1520 points against him. This makes his net score +940 for the entire session. On the other hand, if a player scores only 1650 points, and the opponents score 1940 points against him, then his net score for the session is −290 points. Do not make the mistake of recording only plus scores, for that method gives false results, and is likely to lead to improper doubling and redoubling.

LAW No. 12

Determining the Winner

The player with the largest plus score is the winner. Other players with plus scores rank in descending order followed by the players with minus scores, the one with the largest minus being last.

COMMENT

The method of awarding prizes is left to the discretion of the game director. At mixed parties it is usual to award one or more prizes to the highest ladies and one or more prizes to the highest gentlemen.

HOW TO RUN A TOURNAMENT

The complete technique of tournament direction is very complex. Learn the laws thoroughly and obtain Duplicate trays and score-slips from a Bridge Supply firm. The simpler forms of tournaments can be run by following the directions in this chapter.

Replay

Shuffle the cards. Point the arrows North and bid as in Rubber Bridge. Record the bidding on a slip of paper and then have the player who will make the opening lead name the card on the slip and put the slip (folded) into the tray.

Point the arrows East and bid and play without keeping record except of the total number of points won and lost. Then point the arrows North again. Read the bidding aloud and have the recorded opening lead made. Proceed to replay and record the total.

Determining the winner. (1) Each pair compares its two results made on any deal. Award one match point to the pair which wins more points in the play than it loses in the replay (or vice versa); award one-half match point to each pair for tied boards. The pair with the greater number of match points wins. (2) Each pair adds totals for play and replay and compares totals. The pair wins whose grand total of points won is greater than its grand total of points lost.

Note. To minimize the possibility that memory of the play may affect the replay: allow a few days to elapse between play and replay; select boards at random (instead of consecutively) during replay.

Teams of Four

Shuffle the cards. Seat one team North-South at one table and East-West at the other table. The other team takes the remaining seats. Place half the boards at each table and have them bid and played with arrows pointing North. Then exchange the boards and replay.

Determining the Winner. (1) Compare totals made by North-South pairs. Award one match point for the larger plus (or smaller minus); one-half match point for a tie. The team wins whose North-South pair has most match points. (2) Total all scores made by each North-South pair. The team wins whose North-South pair's grand total is the greater plus (or smaller minus).

Pair Tournaments

Mitchell Movement. Assign half the pairs to North-South seats; the other half, East-West. With an odd number of tables, distribute boards evenly among the tables in order from Table 1 to the highest numbered table. Each pair is known by the number of the

table at which it starts. After each deal has been bid and played, the North player enters the score on the slip. When all tables have finished play, the East-West pairs progress to the next higher numbered table (and from the highest numbered table to Table 1); the boards move to the next lower numbered table (and from Table 1 to the highest numbered table). Proceed thus until each East-West pair has played at each table.

When the number of tables is even, station one set of boards on a stand (called a 'relay stand') between the two middle tables.

Thus, with four tables, put the relay stand between Tables 2 and 3. This stand is considered a table *for the movement of boards only*. If it is planned that each pair should play four boards against each other pair, Boards 1-4 are played simultaneously by Tables 1 and 4; Boards 5-8 are played at Table 2; Boards 9-12 are placed on the relay stand and are not played in the first round; and Boards 13-16 are played at Table 3. After these boards have been played, the boards progress from Table 3 to the relay stand and are not played during the next round; the boards which started at the relay stand go to Table 2 and are played there.

Howell Movement. Follow directions printed on Howell Guide Cards, obtainable at any Bridge Supply firm.

Determining the Winner. (1) See Match-Point Scoring, page 590. (2) An alternate method for Mitchell movement only is Total Point Scoring, pages 547-8.

Individual Tournaments

Assign each player a number and starting position. To determine the winner, see Match-Point Scoring, page 547. A schedule for an eight-player tournament follows:

Schedule for Eight Players[1]

	Table 1					*Table 2*			
	N	*S*	*E*	*W*	*Boards*	*N*	*S*	*E*	*W*
1st Round	8	1	4	2	1 to 4	7	3	5	6
2nd Round	8	2	5	3	5 to 8	1	4	6	7
3rd Round	8	3	6	4	9 to 12	2	5	7	1
4th Round	8	4	7	5	13 to 16	3	6	1	2
5th Round	8	5	1	6	17 to 20	4	7	2	3
6th Round	8	6	2	7	21 to 24	5	1	3	4
7th Round	8	7	3	1	25 to 28	6	2	4	5

[1] Schedules for individual tournaments for larger entries can be obtained from any Bridge Supply firm.

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CONTRACT BRIDGE SCORING TABLE

Trick Points for Declarer

Odd Tricks Bid and Won in	Undoubled	Doubled
Clubs or Diamonds, each	20	40
Hearts or Spades, each	30	60
No-trump, first	40	80
No-trump, each subsequent	30	60

Redoubling doubles the doubled points for Odd Tricks.
Vulnerability does not affect points for Odd Tricks.
100 Trick Points constitute a game.

Premium Points for Defenders | Declarer

	Not Vulnerable	Vulnerable
Overtricks	Trick Value	Trick Value
Undoubled, each	100	200
Doubled, each		
Undertricks		
Undoubled, each	50	100
Doubled, first	100	200
Doubled, each subsequent	200	300

Redoubling doubles the doubled points for Overtricks and Undertricks.

Premium Points for Declarer | Holder

Honours in One Hand	All Honours	150
	Four Trump Honours	100
Slams Bid and Won	Little, not vulnerable 500, vulnerable	750
	Grand, ,, ,, 1000, ,,	1500
Rubber Points	Two game	700
	Three game	500

Unfinished Rubber—Winners of one game score 300 points.
Doubling and Redoubling do not affect Honour, Slam, or Rubber points.
Vulnerability does not affect points for Honours.

£1 ONE POUND REWARD

and an autographed copy of

"CONTRACT BRIDGE COMPLETE"

will be paid by the author to any player holding a complete thirteen-card suit —or a 4-3-3-3 hand containing only one five and all lower cards dealt in actual play.

The newspapers are perennially bombarded with reports of hands which mathematically occur only once in millions of deals.

This does not seem impossible to me, because of the Law of Symmetry (Chapter XXXVII in this book), and I am anxious, for my own personal records, to have an accurate count on the number of these phenomena which are truly dealt in the course of normal play. I will therefore pay a reward of One Pound—and send an autographed copy of *Contract Bridge Complete*—to any holder of either of the following freaks:

1. *A hand containing a complete thirteen-card suit.*

2. *A hand distributed 4-3-3-3, with only one five and all lower cards. For example:* ♠ 5 4 3 2 ♥ 4 3 2 ♦ 4 3 2 ♣ 4 3 2.

If you are dealt such a hand, all you have to do to collect this reward is follow this procedure:

All four players in the game should sign a statement that such a hand was held by one of them, and that it was dealt in normal play in accordance with the following conditions:

1. The hand must have been played in Rubber Bridge, not Duplicate.

2. It must have been dealt in accordance with the laws of Bridge concerning the shuffle and the deal.

3. It cannot be the result of a goulash, or other unlawful deal.

4. The bidding of the hand must be given.

This offer is good until notice to the contrary appears in *The Bridge World.*

If you hold such a hand, to obtain the reward send the properly authenticated statement to

ELY CULBERTSON
Editor, *The Bridge World Magazine*
30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York

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AND RESPONSES